Nov. 11, 1985

THE NEW YORKER

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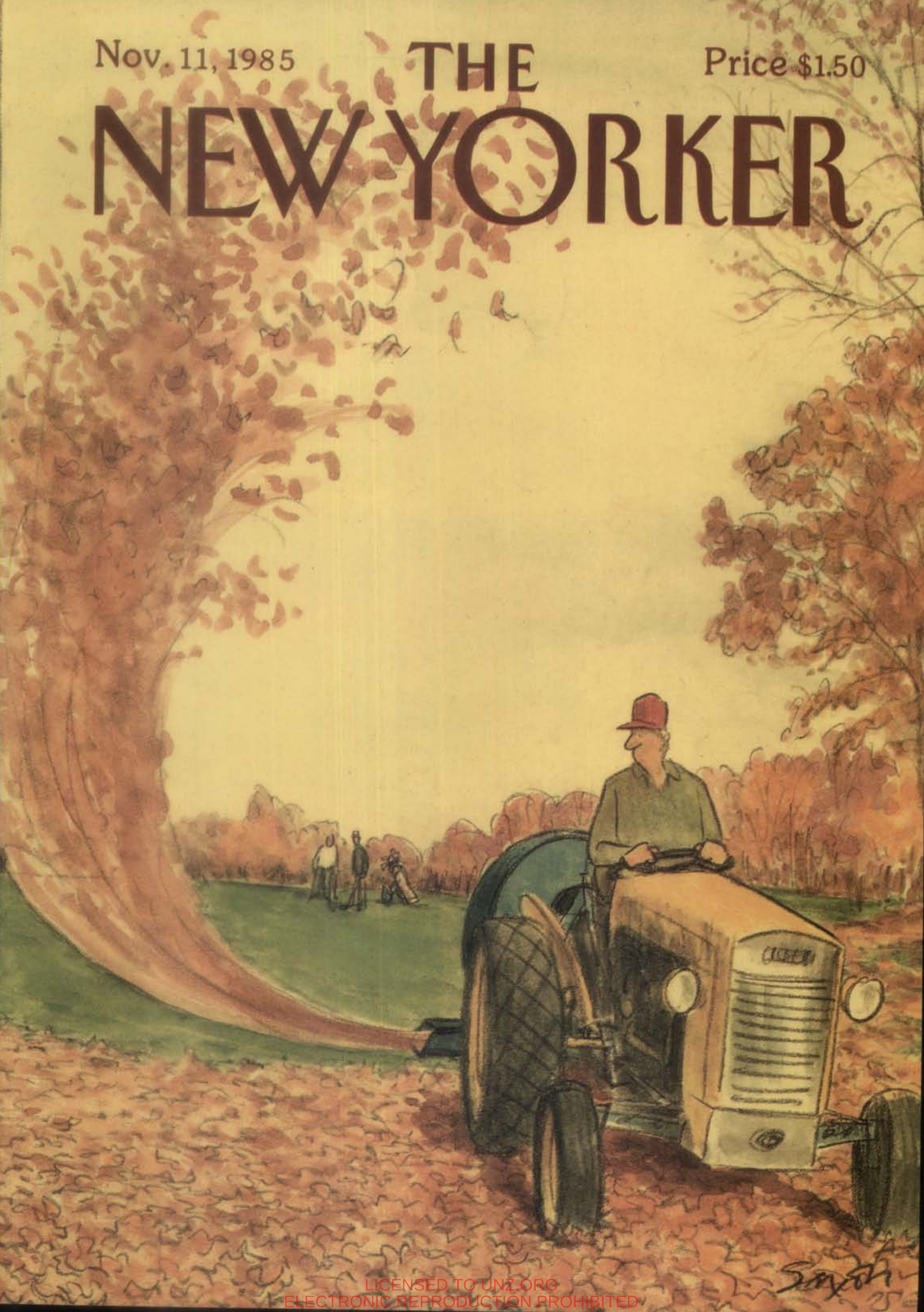

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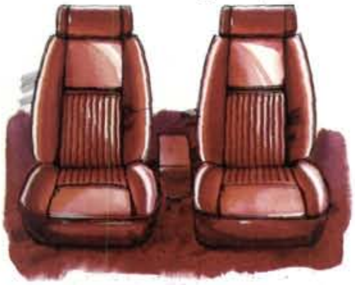

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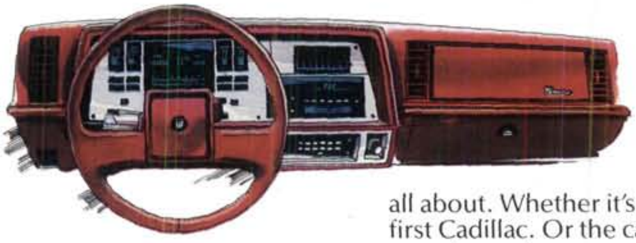

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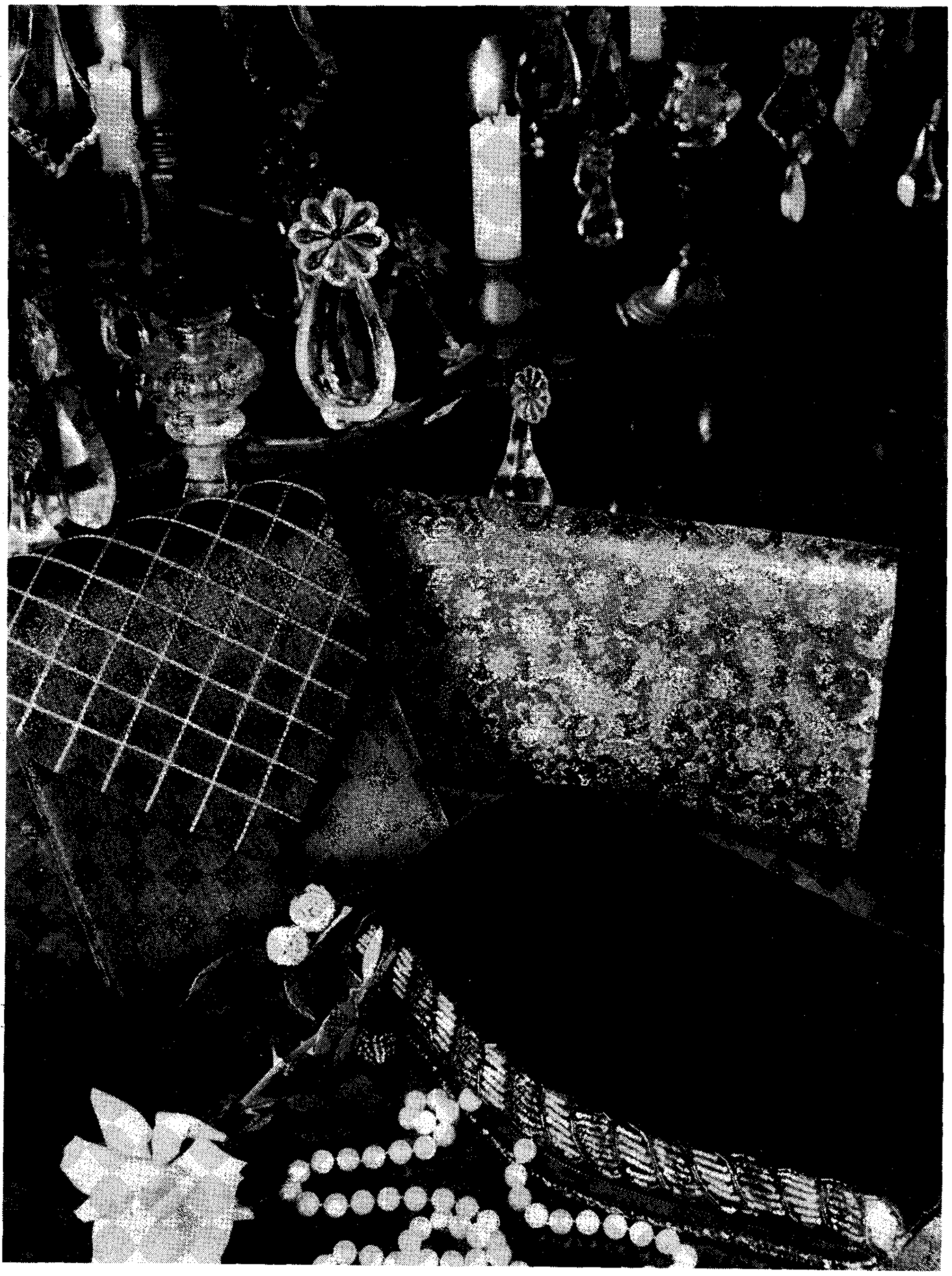

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

As Is—This touching play by William M. Hoffman concerns a personable young homosexual who is afflicted with AIDS, and is also a documentary of sorts about his milieu in this city. The lively, impressionistic performance was directed by Marshall W. Mason, and the acting by the large cast, several of whom appear in multiple roles, is just right. With Jonathan Hogan and Jonathan Hadary. (Reviewed in our issue of 3/25/85.) (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Aunt Dan & Lemon—A series of extended conversations about good and evil, interspersed with melodrama. The author, Wallace Shawn, plays three roles to great comic effect; other members of the superb cast are Kathryn Pogson, Linda Hunt, Lynsey Baxter, and Linda Bassett. The admirable direction is by Max Stafford-Clark. (11/4/85) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Big River—A musical about Huckleberry Finn and Jim and their adventures on the Mississippi, with a book by William Hauptman and music and lyrics by Roger Miller. The large cast is full of charm and so is the scenery, by Heidi Landesman. (5/13/85) (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Biloxi Blues—The second comedy—"Brighton Beach Memoirs" was the first—in which we are invited to follow Neil Simon's years of growing up and becoming a writer. (4/8/85) (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 757-8646. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Bingo—A musical, still somewhat in the works, about a black baseball team in 1939. The show, as snappy and buoyant as its title, has a lively score by George Fischoff, lyrics by Hy Gilbert, and a book by Mr. Gilbert and Ossie Davis, who also directed. With Norman Matlock, James Randolph, John R. McCurry, and David Winston Barge, among others. (AMAS Repertory Theatre, 1 E. 104th St. Thursdays through Saturdays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, Nov. 17. For information about tickets, call 369-8000.)

Circle Repertory Company—Presenting two plays: **TALLEY & SON,** a lightly revised version of Lanford Wilson's fine play "A Tale Told." . . . **TOMORROW'S MONDAY,** a rather weak domestic comedy that Paul Osborn wrote in 1936. Farley Granger, Helen Stenborg, Richard Backus, and Robert Macnaughton are among the good actors on hand. (Both reviewed in our issue of 11/4/85.) (99 Seventh Ave. S., at Sheridan Sq. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, Nov. 24. For information about play scheduling, call 924-7100.)

Curse of the Starving Class—A revival of Sam Shepard's brilliant, humorous, passionate play. (9/2/85) (890 Theatre, Broadway at 19th St. 533-8834. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2:30 and Sundays at 3.)

Dames at Sea—A revival of a musical by Jim Wise (score) and George Haimsohn and Robin Miller (book and lyrics). (Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

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Double Image Theatre—Presenting two plays in alternating weekly repertory. **FILTHY RICH,** by George F. Walker: Wednesday through Friday, Nov. 6-8, and Saturday, Nov. 16. . . . **SAVAGE IN LIMBO:** The scene is a bar in the Bronx, and many of the rackety customers are in personal trouble of one sort or another. John Patrick Shanley's play is often funny, though seldom quite believable. The production, under Mark Linn-Baker's direction, is splendid; with Mary McDonnell, Deborah Hedwall, and Randle Mell, among others. (10/7/85) Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 9-10, and Tuesday through Friday, Nov. 12-15. (47th Street Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 247-5361. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, Nov. 24.)

Doubles—A comedy by David Wiltse about some fiercely competitive but not very interesting tennis players in far-off Norwalk, Connecticut. With Keir Dullea, Cliff Gorman, Robert Reed, and Charles Repole. The director is Morton Da Costa. (5/20/85) (Ritz, 219 W. 48th St. 582-4022. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Equity Library Theatre—A revival of the 1963 musical **SHE LOVES ME**—Jerry Bock (score), Sheldon Harnick (lyrics), and Joe Masteroff (book)—is the second in this season's series of eight productions. (103rd St. and Riverside Dr. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30. Closes Sunday, Nov. 24. For information about tickets, for which contributions are requested, call 663-2028.)

The Iceman Cometh—An unexpectedly lifeless production of a play that is, in the best of circumstances, more notable for duration than content. With Jason Robards, Donald Moffat, and Barnard Hughes, and directed by José Quintero. (10/7/85) (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 575-9200. Tuesdays and Thursdays through Saturdays at 7. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

I'm Not Rappaport—Herb Gardner's synthetic, though often entertaining, comedy about two old men who share a bench in Central Park is given an expert performance by Cleavon Little and Judd Hirsch. (6/17/85) (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 869-4731. Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Matinées Wednesday and Saturday at 2, and Sunday at 3. After Sunday, Nov. 10, no performances until Tuesday, Nov. 19, when the show will reopen at the Booth, 222 W. 45th St.)

Light Opera of Manhattan—Friday, Nov. 8, at 8; Saturday, Nov. 9, at 3:30 and 8; and Sun-

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COVER: *Charles Saxon*

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day, Nov. 10, at 3:30: Rudolf Friml's **ROSE MARIE.** . . . ¶ Friday and Saturday, Nov. 15-16, at 8; and Sunday, Nov. 17, at 3:30: Victor Herbert's **NAUGHTY MARIETTA.** (Norman Thomas, 111 E. 33rd St. 532-6180.)

LOVE AS WE KNOW IT—Act I of Gil Schwartz's very funny comedy is a clutch of skits; Act II is a skittish play. The subject is sex, and it is treated, more often than not, with originality and gaiety and style. Polly Draper, Michael Countryman, Marek Johnson, John C. McGinley, and Karen Ludwig are the actors; Josh Mostel directed. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Intar, 410 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Sundays at 3. Closes Saturday, Nov. 23.)

A MAP OF THE WORLD—An expatriate Indian novelist of more or less conservative views confronts a young English journalist from a socialist publication at a conference on world poverty in Bombay. David Hare's play becomes muddled at times, but it is never dull, and the acting of the large cast is very good. Roshan Seth and Zeljko Ivanek are splendid in the leading roles. Mr. Hare directed. (10/14/85) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO—A mockery of the Beaumarchais classic, carried out with inappropriate glee by the director Andrei Serban. Roller skates are the chief prop. (10/28/85) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

MAYOR—A musical based on the best-seller of the same name by Edward I. Koch. With a score and lyrics by Charles Strouse and a book by Warren Leight. (Latin Quarter, Broadway at 48th St. 586-3905. Tuesdays through Saturdays, except Wednesday, Nov. 6, at 8, and Sunday, Nov. 10, at 6. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

MIRROR REPERTORY COMPANY—The first in this season's series of productions is a return engagement of Maurice Valency's adaptation of **THE MADWOMAN OF CHAILLOT,** by Jean Giraudoux. (Theatre at St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays at 2, Saturdays at 5, and Sundays at 3. For tickets, call 223-6440.)

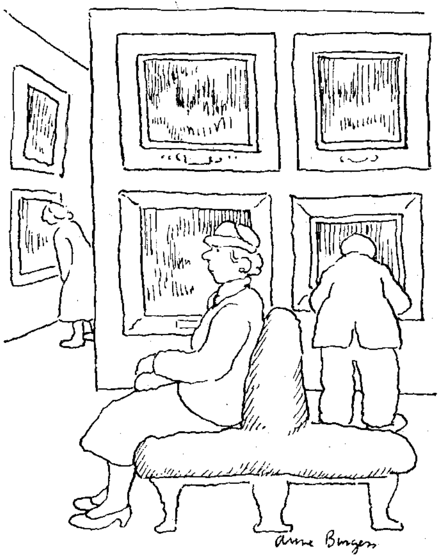
NEGRO ENSEMBLE COMPANY—The American of **EYES OF THE AMERICAN** is a C.I.A. man who comes to a newly independent island in the West Indies. The role is portrayed by the stalwart Graham Brown, who also doubles as a dictator; the other actors—just as good—are Glynn Turman and Seret Scott. The play, by Samm-Art Williams, is always absorbing but not always clear. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 246-8545. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 8:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 3 and Sundays at 2:30.)

THE NEWS—A musical with a score and lyrics by Paul Schierhorn and a book by Mr. Schierhorn, David Rotenberg, and R. Vincent Park. Staged by Mr. Rotenberg. Previews Wednesday, Nov. 6. Opens officially on Thursday, Nov. 7. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8; opening-night curtain at 6:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

THE NORMAL HEART—An interminable non-play about the victims of AIDS in the homosexual community of this city. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

NOT ABOUT HEROES—Stephen MacDonald's script about the association of the poets Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen, at a mental hospital in 1917, hardly adds up to a play, but the performances of Edward Herrmann and Dylan Baker more than make up for its weakness. Dianne Wiest directed. (11/4/85) (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Wednesdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

THE ODD COUPLE—A depressing novelty in theatrical history: the radical mutilation of a successful comedy by its author, Neil Simon, who has seen fit to turn the male characters in the original version into female characters. (6/24/85) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)



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ORPHANS—A melodrama, by Lyle Kessler, about two young brothers—one a street thief and pickpocket, the other an apparent dimwit—and an older mobster who takes over their house and their lives. The first act works quite well, the second is merely serviceable, but what really counts is the performance, under the dynamic direction of Gary Sinise. The show is an import from the Steppenwolf Company of Chicago. (5/20/85) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

PENN & TELLER—A sublime combination of conjuring and comedy. Penn Jillette does the talking; Teller is silent. (5/6/85) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Wednesdays through Fridays at 8; Sundays at 7; and Saturday, Nov. 16, at 7 and 10. Matinées Sundays and Saturday, Nov. 16, at 3, and Wednesday, Nov. 6, at 2.)

ROCKBOUND—A musical with book and lyrics by C. J. Critt and a score by Roberta Baum. Preview Wednesday, Nov. 6. Opens officially on Thursday, Nov. 7. (South Street Theatre, 424 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Wednesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10.)

THE SEARCH FOR SIGNS OF INTELLIGENT LIFE IN THE UNIVERSE—Lily Tomlin alone onstage but impersonating a remarkably varied cast of characters, provided for her by Jane Wagner. (10/7/85) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8; Fridays at 7 and 10; and Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

SEASCAPE WITH SHARKS AND DANCER—A foolish actors' exercise that even the capable actors cannot rescue. They are Ivar Brogger and Susan Greenhill. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Hudson Guild Theatre, 441 W. 26th St. 760-9810. Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, Nov. 10.)

SINGIN' IN THE RAIN—What can only be called a watered-down version of the celebrated M-G-M original. The show, directed and choreographed by Twyla Tharp, tries to do too many things at once, with a cast that is hardworking but not very winsome; the absence of the incomparable Gene Kelly becomes a rueful presence. (7/15/85) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

SONG AND DANCE—Bernadette Peters sings a lot and Christopher d'Amboise dances a lot, but their labors are in vain—this is a musical without a story and almost without any characters. Music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, lyrics by Don Black. (9/30/85) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

THE SPECIAL—A musical with a book and lyrics by Mike Gutwillig and a score by Galt MacDermot. (Jewish Repertory Theatre, 344 E. 14th St. 279-4200. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8; Saturdays at 8:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 2. Through Sunday, Nov. 24.)

TATTERDEMALION—A musical by Judd Woldin, based on Israel Zangwill's novella "King of Schnorrers." (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

THE WALTZ OF THE TOREADORS—This tame revival of Jean Anouilh's comedy is rescued, to some extent, by the acting of Carole Shelley, Tammy Grimes, and Alvin Epstein. (10/28/85) (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883. Wednesday through Saturday at 8. Matinées Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday at 2. Closes Sunday, Nov. 10.)

WHAT'S A NICE COUNTRY LIKE YOU . . . DOING IN A STATE LIKE THIS?—An updated version of the 1973 satirical revue by the original creators, composer Cary Hoffman and lyricist Ira Gasman. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S., at Sheridan Sq. 691-6226. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

YOURS, ANNE—A vapid musical based on Anne Frank's diary. (10/28/85) (Playhouse 91, 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays at 2:30, and Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

LONG RUNS—**BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS:** Neil Simon's autobiographical comedy. (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LA CAGE AUX FOLLES:** A big, handsomely designed and handsomely costumed musical starring Van Johnson and Walter Charles. The book, by Harvey Fierstein, is sentimental nonsense, but the music, by Jerry Herman, is pleasantly tuneful. Everybody else intends to see the show, so why not you? (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 757-2626. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **CATS:** A musical version of T. S. Eliot's "Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats." Music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, choreography by Gillian Lynne, and direction (and some lyrics) by Trevor Nunn. A superb spectacle, which may run for many more years and give cats the right to vote and hold office. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** 10,624 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE FOREIGNER:** A very funny play by the late Larry Shue with good performances by every single member of the company, most notably Kevin Geer as a lovable half-wit. Jerry Zaks was the admirable director. (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **42ND STREET:** Pleasantly old-fashioned choreography by the late Gower Champion and a few classic songs enliven an otherwise inert pastiche of the Warner Brothers movie that made Ruby Keeler a star. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2,

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS:** Based on Roger Corman's 1960 horror quickie about a man-eating plant, this exuberant, jokey musical is wholly free of camp. The score is by Alan Menken, and Howard Ashman directed and wrote the book and lyrics. Martin P. Robinson designed the menacing plant. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, *and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Sun*days at 2 and 5.) . . . **OH! CALCUTTA!:** A collection of short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 302-2302. Mondays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

MISCELLANY

FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 1985—A musical satire of Shubert Alley denizens. The lyrics to the song parodies are by Gerard Alessandrini. (Palsson's Upstairs, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8:30; Fridays and Saturdays at 8:30 and 11:30; and Sun*days at 8:30.)*

DANCE

JOFFREY BALLET—Final performances of the engagement—Wednesday through Friday, Nov. 6-8, at 8: "The Taming of the Shrew." . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 9, at 8: "Reflections," "Love Songs," "Confetti," and "Jeu de Cartes." . . . ¶ Sunday, Nov. 10, at 2: "Dream Dances," "Confetti," and "Rodeo." . . . ¶ Sunday, Nov. 10, at 7:30: "Light Rain," "Arden Court," "Untitled," and "Jamboree." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989.)

MAURICE BÉJART'S *BALLET OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY*—Opening performances of a three-week engagement that will run through Sunday, Dec. 1—Wednesday, Nov. 13, and Friday, Nov. 15, at 8, and Saturday, Nov. 16, at 2: "Le Concours." . . . ¶ Thursday, Nov. 14, at 8: "7 Greek Dances," "5 Preludes for Cello," and "Le Baiser de la Fée." . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 16, at 8: "7 Greek Dances," "Symphonie pour un Homme Seul," and "Le Baiser de la Fée." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989.)

TANGO ARGENTINO—A troupe of thirty dancers, singers, and musicians. (Mark Hellinger Theatre, 237 W. 51st St. 757-7064. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

BALLET HISPANICO OF NEW YORK—A one-week engagement. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Wednesday through Friday, Nov. 6-8, at 8; Saturday Nov. 9, at 2 and 8; and Sunday, Nov. 10, at 2 and 7:30.)

PEGGY SPINA TAP COMPANY—Presenting "Fascinating Rhythms." (Marymount Manhattan Theatre, 221 E. 71st St. Thursday through Saturday, Nov. 7-9, at 8, and Sunday, Nov. 10, at 6. For tickets, call 924-0077.)

JAMES CUNNINGHAM'S ACME COMPANY—Programs *of contemporary dance.* (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave., at 10th St. Friday through Sunday, Nov. 8-10, at 8. For information about tickets, call 924-0077.)

AYAKO UCHIYAMA DANCE THEATRE—A program of Kabuki dance. (Schimmel Center for the Arts, Pace University, Spruce St., between Nassau and Gold Sts. 488-1715. Friday, Nov. 8, at 8, and Saturday, Nov. 9, at 2.)

MOLISSA FENLEY AND DANCERS—Presenting "Second Sight" and two premières, "Cenotaph" and "Esperanto." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Tuesday, Nov. 12, at 7:30; Wednesday through Friday, Nov. 13-15, at 8; Saturday, Nov. 16, at 2 and 8; and Sunday, Nov. 17, at 2 and 7:30.)

EIKO & KOMA—Performances of "Thirst" (première) and "Elegy" (New York première). (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Thursday through Saturday, Nov. 14-16, at 8. Through Sunday, Nov. 24.)

JUILLIARD DANCE ENSEMBLE—Benefit performances of new and repertory works. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. Thursday and Friday, Nov. 14-15, at 8, and Saturday, Nov. 16, at 2 and 8. For tickets, call 874-1515, Mondays through Fridays from 9:30 to 5:30.)

RIVERSIDE DANCE FESTIVAL—Performances by two companies. **ZE'EVA COHEN AND DANCERS:** Wednesday, Nov. 13, and Friday, Nov. 15, at 8, and Sunday, Nov. 17, at 2. . . . **INDRANI & SUKANYA:** Thursday, Nov. 14, at 8, and Saturday, Nov. 16, at 2 and 8. (Theatre of the Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. 864-2929.)

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NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing in which bold-face *type is used to pick out a few of the more nota*ble performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**JULIE WILSON,** a wonderfully convincing singer and a worldly-wise or vulnerable (whichever is called for) interpreter, concentrates on the music of the Gershwins right now. She performs in the Oak Room Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. Dining.

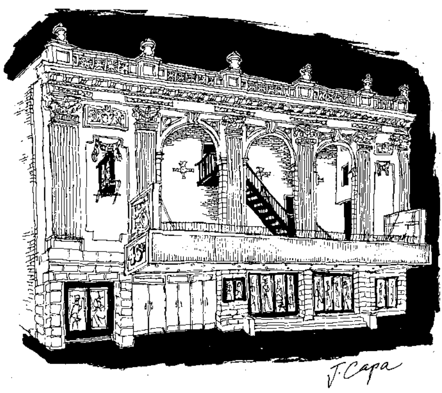
ANGRY SQUIRE, 216 Seventh Ave., at 23rd St. (242-9066)—A long, narrow, nautical bar, restaurant, and jazz haunt. The highlights of the lineup: Friday and Saturday, Nov. 8-9, pianist **WALTER BISHOP, JR.,** and his trio; Wednesday and Thursday, Nov. 13-14, singer-pianist **NINA SHELDON'S** trio; and Friday and Saturday, Nov. 15-16, the **BARRY HARRIS** trio. Sets begin Sundays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at ten.

BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—**BLOSSOM DEARIE** is ensconced in this club to sing in her small, delicate, uncomplicated, diction-perfect voice. Early-evening concerts Wednesdays through Saturdays from six-thirty to eight-thirty. Singer **KAREN AKERS** performs Wednesday, Nov. 6, at nine, and Thursday through Saturday, Nov. 7-9, at nine and eleven. And then on Tuesday, Nov. 12, **MARTHA RAYE,** of all people, will move in to mug at nine and eleven.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Outside, the Village streets teem with unbridled youth; inside, this dark, serene club offers up music for which there are no videos. Tenor saxophonist and composer **WAYNE SHORTER** winds up his rare New York club appearance on Sunday, Nov. 10; pianist **HOD O'BRIEN** will drop by on Monday, Nov. 11; and **PHYLLIS HYMAN** will begin singing here on Tuesday, Nov. 12. Sets from about after nine. **TED CURSON** heads a jam session every night but Monday after the last set until about (yawn) four in the morning. Dining.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—The varied lineup: Wednesday, Nov. 6, **BUSTER POINDEXTER** (a.k.a. David Johansen) **& THE BANSHEES OF BLUE;** Thursday, Nov. 7, two real fine guitarists, **JOHN RENBOURN** and **STEFAN GROSSMAN;** Friday and Saturday, Nov. 8-9, the **TOM BROWNE–NOEL POINTER** quintet; Wednesday, Nov. 13, Exile; and Friday and Saturday, Nov. 15-16, blues singer and guitarist **JOHN HAMMOND.** Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A great view from a bar stool (unless there are a lot of standees, which is usually the case) of first-rate piano-bass duos. **HAROLD DANKO** works with **RUFUS REID** through Saturday, Nov. 9, and **JOANNE BRACKEEN** and **CALVIN HILL** will enter on Monday, Nov. 11. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.



CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle is an elegant little room. It's where **BOBBY SHORT** has come home to perform for a while, and where tuxedos are worn by some of the patrons as well as by Mr. Short, his bassist **(BEVERLY PEER),** his drummer **(ROBBIE SCOTT),** and the headwaiter. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at ten and midnight. . . . **BARBARA CARROLL** is back in the *Bemelmans Bar at the piano, soloing and* singing, from ten Tuesdays through Saturdays.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—Rock and roll as a garage industry. Monday is showcase night. Music from long after nine-thirty.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—A snazzy downstairs jazz club. Silken tenor saxophonist **STAN GETZ** is leading his latest quartet Tuesdays through Sundays. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL,** the Thomas Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Sets begin Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays through Sundays at eight. Dining.

FOLK CITY, 130 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (254-8449)—Folkies, rockers, folk-rockers, and comics. Wednesday, Nov. 6, the Turbines, Marti Jones, and Don Dixon; Thursday, Nov. 7, the funny folk-rocking **DEAD MILKMEN,** Young Fresh Fellows, Paul Metsa, and the Stringers; Friday, Nov. 8, **SUZANNE VEGA;** Saturday, Nov. 9, the Clintons, the **CUCUMBERS,** Miracle Legion, the Outlets, and Maximum America; Sunday, Nov. 10, comedienne Jane Brucker; Monday, Nov. 11, Sonny Ochs and a hootenanny, by gosh; Tuesday, Nov. 12, Eileen Clohessy; Wednesday, Nov. 13, the **BEN VAUGHN COMBO,** *a witty, adept, journeyman* rock band with a standup, on-the-mark drummer; Friday, Nov. 15, Jesse Winchester; and Saturday, Nov. 16, **MELANIE.** Shows usually begin at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty.

FREDDY'S, 308 E. 49th St. (888-1633)—**KAY STARR** goes out on this stage a star and comes back a star, too, at nine and eleven until Saturday, Nov. 9. Dining.

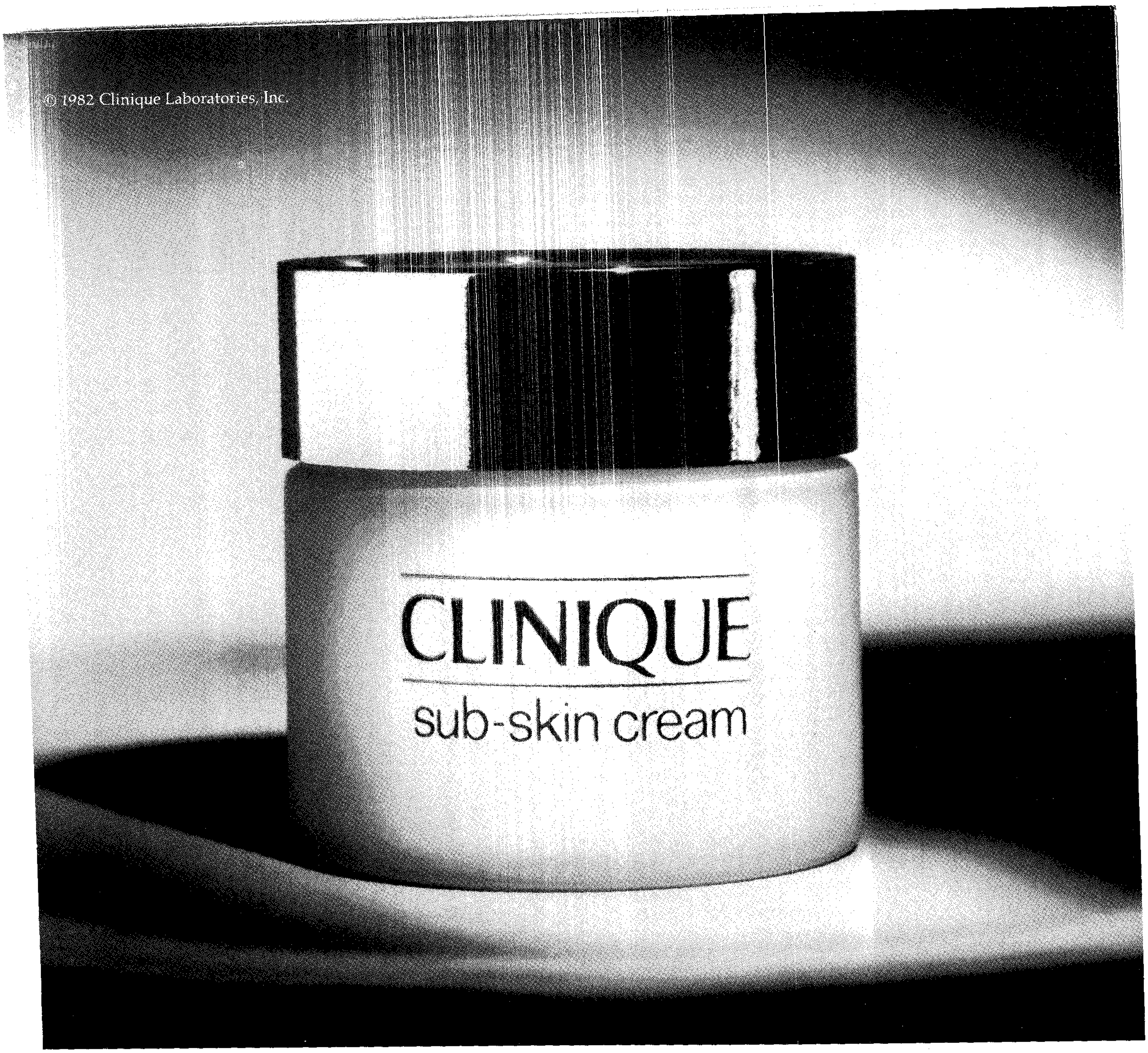
GREGORY'S, 1149 First Ave., at 63rd St. (371-2220)—Wednesdays through Sundays, **DAVID ALLYN** sings with Scott Hardy and Jay Anderson, and Tuesdays belong to guitarist **CHUCK WAYNE'S** trio. These groups begin about ten.

HANRATTY'S, 1754 Second Ave., at 91st St. (289-3200)—A back-room restaurant that features **ROGER KELLAWAY** at the piano Tuesdays through Saturdays. Sundays are claimed by pianist Keith MacDonald, and Mondays by **DICK HYMAN.** Music Sundays through Thursdays from eight-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays from nine.

KNICKERBOCKER SALOON, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A bar and restaurant in the piano-bass district. **LOU LEVY** and **MICHAEL MOORE,** a walking piano-bass district, collaborate Tuesdays through Saturdays. Music from nine-thirty.

LONE STAR CAFÉ, 61 Fifth Ave., *at 13th St. (242-*1664)—A spirited, noisy, crowded hangout for expatriate Texans and French tourists, where they celebrate Texas Independence Day but not Bastille Day. Wednesday, Nov. 6, rockabillyist **ROBERT GORDON;** Thursday, Nov. 7, R. & B.-ists **WHO IT IS;** Friday, Nov. 8, the Spencer Davis Group; Saturday, Nov. 9, blues singer and blues-harp wiz **PAUL BUTTERFIELD;** Sunday, Nov. 10, the rollicking **ELVIN BISHOP,** a former Butterfield guitarist and singer who does not draw sedate audiences; Monday, Nov. 11, the Acoustic Strawbs; Tuesday and Wednesday, Nov. 12-13, guitarist **DICKEY BETTS;** Thursday, Nov. 14, the wonderful blues player ***ALBERT COLLINS*** and Lefty Dizz; Friday, Nov. 15, Soul Bro No. 1 **JAMES BROWN,** who puts *oooooh's* in the blues; and Saturday, Nov. 16, the historic sixties Seattle rock band, the Kingsmen. Music after nine nightly. Dining.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—*Jonathan Schwartz sings and chats Tuesdays*



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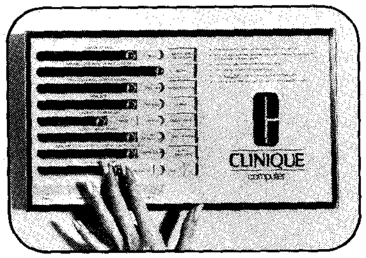

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

through Saturdays at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty. On Monday nights from nine-thirty to midnight, Woody Allen is likely to show up to play celebrity clarinet with a New Orleans-style sextet. Dining. Closed Sundays.

Mikell's, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—A worthy jazz and rhythm-and-blues haunt. Wednesday, Nov. 6, Rock Wilk; Thursday through Saturday, Nov. 7-9, and Friday and Saturday, Nov. 15-16, vibraharp*ist* **ROY AYERS;** *Monday*, Nov. 11, **JUMP STREET;** and Wednesday and Thursday, Nov. 13-14, pianist **MICHEL CAMILO'S** trio. Music from about ten until two. Dining.

Ritz, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—A big, fancy (but the appropriate dress is black sneakers rather than black tie) thirties ballroom, complete with eighties video, that presents past, present, future, past-perfect, present-perfect, future-perfect, and imperfect forms of rock and roll. Thursday, Nov. 7, the Damned; Friday, Nov. 8, Stryper; Saturday, Nov. 9, Everything but the Girl; Sunday, Nov. 10, *from Africa,* **SEIGNEUR TABULEY ROCHEREAU;** *and* Thursday and Friday, Nov. 14-15, Nils Lofgren. Shows begin at nine Mondays through Thursdays, and at eleven Fridays and Saturdays. Dancing.

Seventh Avenue South, 21 Seventh Ave. S., at Leroy St. (242-4694)—The jazz, funk, fusion, Latin-jazz lineup: Wednesday, Nov. 6, Chicago's Big Band Machine; Thursday, Nov. 7, Jim Campagnola & Friends; Friday and Saturday, Nov. 8-9, the Band of Doom, with guitarist **HIRAM BULLOCK,** bassist **WILL LEE,** and others; Tuesday, Nov. 12, Leni Stern; Wednesday, Nov. 13, Crossing Point; and Thursday through Saturday, Nov. 14-16, guitarist **JOHN SCOFIELD.** Mondays are reserved for the **TOM PIERSON** orchestra. Music from nine-thirty. Sundays at seven-thirty and nine-thirty, the Caimano band is in charge.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—This place offers the kind of authentic Brazilian (and African and salsa and reggae) exuberance that makes it feel like *carnaval* every weekend (and during the week isn't exactly dullsville, either). The music: Wednesday and Thursday, Nov. 6-7, **JUDY MOWATT,** a strong, sure, expressive reggae singer; Friday, Nov. 8, Brazilian Energy; Saturday, Nov. 9, **MIKATA;** Tuesday through Thursday, Nov. 12-14, tenor saxophonist **GATO BARBIERI;** Friday, Nov. 15, Skah Shah, a Haitian band; and Saturday, Nov. 16, **PÉ-DE-BOI.** Closed Sundays and Mondays.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Crowded and convivial. The **PHIL WOODS** quintet works out until Sunday, Nov. 10; starting Tuesday, Nov. 12, the **SUN RA ARKESTRA** will go into orbit; and Mondays are the property of the **GIL EVANS** orchestra. Shows from about ten. Dining.

Tramps, 125 E. 15th St. (777-5077)—Your simple basic bar-and-back-room blues-and-rock haunt, even though the canopy reads "Irish." The lineup: Wednesday, Nov. 6, **ELLIOTT MURPHY** and band; Thursdays, Nov. 7 and 14, Kristi Rose and Chris Chriso; Friday and Saturday, Nov. 8-9, blues saxophonist **JAY MC NEELY;** Monday, Nov. 11, the Daybreakers; Wednesday, Nov. 13, Skip Castro; and Friday and Saturday, Nov. 15-16, Lefty Dizz. Music after nine-thirty.

Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—On Mondays, exciting, adept salsa bands take over the big downstairs room at nine to play for excitable audiences. On Nov. 11, the sultans of salsa **TITO PUENTE** *and* **RAY BARRETTO** (whew!) and their orchestras, too, plus pianist **PAPO LUCCA,** as guest soloist. . . . ¶ Meanwhile, out on the Terrace, **JUNIOR MANCE** and **MARTY RIVERA** are on hand nightly except Mondays after nine-thirty. Jazz harpist **DAPHNE HELLMAN** also drops in on Tuesdays.

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Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The hallowed basement of jazz. Trombonist **SLIDE HAMPTON** leads a quintet through Sunday, Nov. 10, and on Tuesday, Nov. 12, saxophonist **JOE HENDERSON,** bassist **RON CARTER,** and drummer **AL FOSTER** will descend the stairs. Monday nights are **MEL LEWIS BIG BAND** Blast-Off Nights. Music from ten.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A sleek piano-bass (and, sometimes, guitar-bass) and pasta hangout. **MIKE LE DONNE** and **JAMIL NASSER** are present through Saturday, Nov. 9, and on Tuesday, Nov. 12, **LARRY WILLIS** and **RUFUS REID** will come in. On Sundays, guitarist **GENE BERTONCINI** and bassist **MICHAEL MOORE** are on hand, playing their cheerful brand of chamber music—a mix of classical, jazz, and rock. Mondays belong to Jim Roberts and Dave Dunaway. Music weeknights from eight and Sundays from seven.

JAZZ / FOLK / ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

Kenwood Dennard Trio—With Art Blakey. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. 935-2200. Thursday, Nov. 7, at 7:30.)

Martin Carthy & John Kirkpatric, Robin Williamson, and **Gabriel Yacoub**—Triplex Theatre, 199 Chambers St. 698-1980. Friday, Nov. 8, at 8.

Junior Cook–Bill Hardman Quintet—With Suzanne Klewan and Timmy Shepherd. (Jazz Cultural Theatre, Eighth Ave. between 28th and 29th Sts. 502-4300. Friday and Saturday, Nov. 8-9, at 10, 11:30, and 1.)

Judy Carmichael—Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. Monday, Nov. 11, at 8. No tickets necessary.

Jean-Luc Ponty—Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 787-1477. Wednesday, Nov. 13, at 8.

Terry Riley—With Krishna Bhatt. (Carnegie Recital Hall. 247-7800. Wednesday, Nov. 13, at 8.)

John Hicks—With Elise Wood and Walter Booker. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Friday, Nov. 15, at 8.)

Jaki Byard & the Apollo Stompers—Jazz Cultural Theatre. Friday and Saturday, Nov. 15-16, at 10 and midnight.

Jazz Center of New York—Thursday, Nov. 7, at 8 and 10: Jorge Anders Big Band. . . . ¶ Friday, Nov. 8, at *9:30:* A salute to *Melba Liston*. . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 9, at 9:30 and 11: Billy Harper quintet. . . . ¶ Thursday, Nov. 14, at 8 and 10: Big Apple Jazzwomen Orchestra. (380 Lafayette St. 505-5660.)

Irving Plaza—Friday, Nov. 8: Robyn Hitchcock & the Egyptians, Raunch Hands, and the Flies. . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 9: Afrika Bambaataa and Last Poets. . . . ¶ Thursday, Nov. 14: John Lurie & the Lounge Lizards and Urban Blight. . . . ¶ Friday, Nov. 15: Hoodoo Gurus and the Turbines. . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 16: Waterboys. (17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. 477-3728. Shows start after 9.)

Benefit Concert—Jimmy Smith, Kenny Burrell, Frank Foster, Milt Jackson, and others, in a benefit for the United Negro College Fund. (Beacon Theatre. Friday, Nov. 8, at 8.)

Jazz Films—Film clips from the David Chertok collection, including performances by Billie Holiday, Duke Ellington, Ella Fitzgerald, Benny Goodman, and others. (Eisner and Lubin Auditorium, Loeb Student Center, Washington Sq. S. and LaGuardia Pl. Thursday, Nov. 7, at 8. For information about tickets, call 598-3757.)

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Constantin Alajálov—A showing of this notably observant artist's magazine covers, twenty-two of them for *The New Yorker*. Through Nov. 29. (Society of Illustrators, 128 E. 63rd St. Open Mondays; open Tuesday evenings until 8; closed Saturdays.)

Willem de Kooning—Twenty new canvases in color combinations of red, yellow, and blue or red, orange, and green. Through Saturday, Nov. 16. (Fourcade, 36 E. 75th St.)

Richard Diebenkorn—Abstractions; twelve on canvas, nine on paper. Through Dec. 5. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

Richard Erdman—Ribbonlike, convoluted abstract forms carved in marble, for the most part, and sometimes cast in bronze. Through Nov. 27. (Weintraub, 992 Madison Ave., at 77th St.)

Lyonel Feininger (1871-1956)—Oil paintings recently recovered from East Germany and dating from the years when the artist worked in Germany. Through Nov. 20. (Acquavella, 18 E. 79th St. Open Mondays.)

Michael Goldberg—Red canvases and black canvases from the early sixties. Through Nov. 30. (Vanderwoude Tananbaum, 24 E. 81st St.)

Margaret Israel—Inviting watercolor sketches of Coney Island, Long Beach, and Staten Island, grouped together in panels of ten or more, plus antic ceramic figures ornamented with shards from the artist's kilns. Through Nov. 19. (Cordier & Ekstrom, 417 E. 75th St.)

Irving Kriesberg / John White Alexander (1856-1915)—Large Expressionist paintings and a pastel series. Through Saturday, Nov. 9. / Oil paintings of female figures, still-lifes, and landscapes. Through Dec. 14. (Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St.)

Julio Larraz—Recent paintings by a Magic Realist. Through Dec. 7. (Haime, 1000 Madison Ave., at 77th St. Open Mondays.)

Alberto Magnelli (1888-1971)—Paintings by an Italian artist who embraced Cubism and later focussed on geometric abstraction. Through Dec. 14. (Hutton, 33 E. 74th St.)

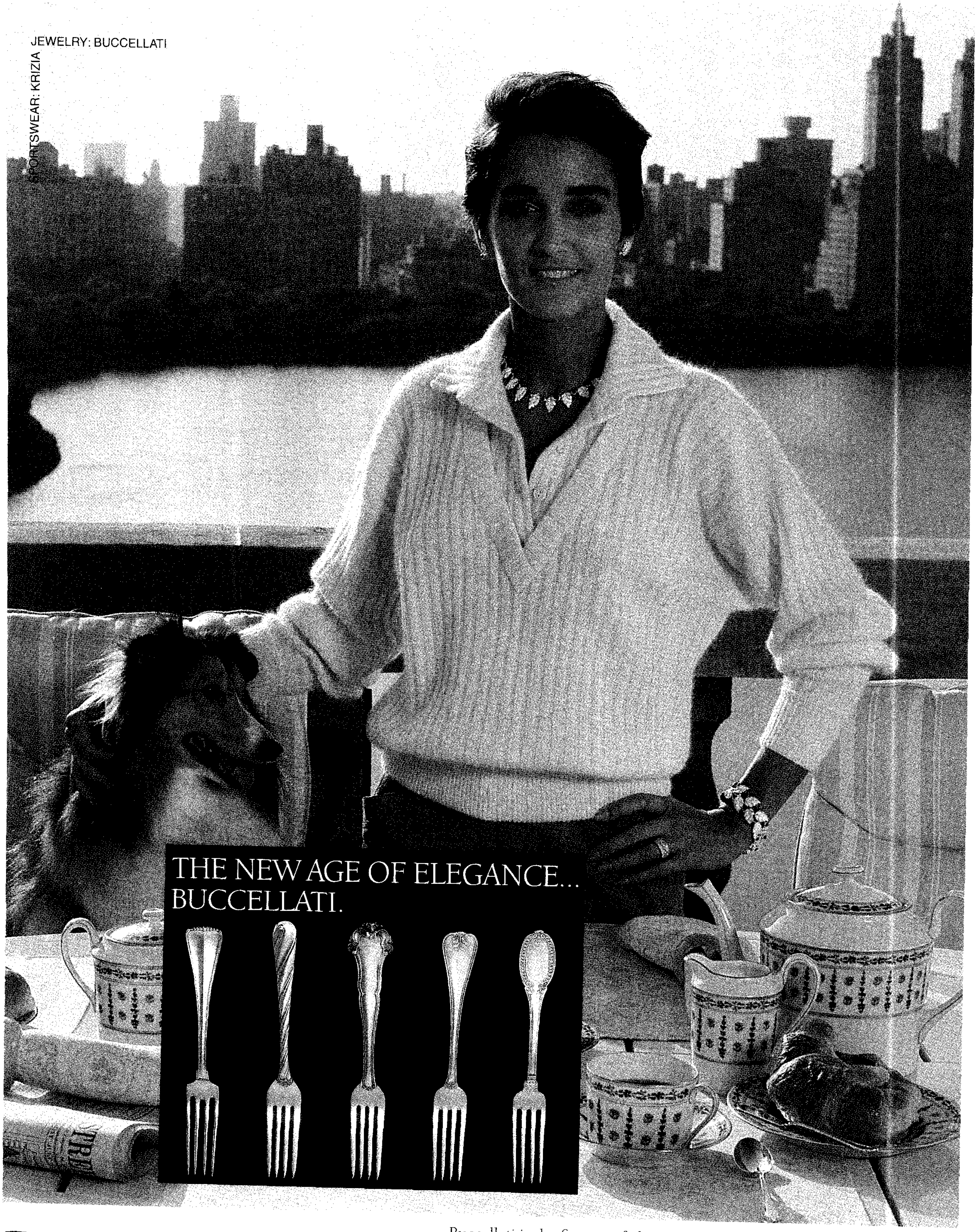
Giacomo Manzù—Twenty bronzes the artist *cast at his foundry in Ardea. Through Dec. 7.* (Paul Rosenberg, 20 E. 79th St.)

John Moore—Representational paintings; Winthrop Square in Boston and a waterfront mill in Waterville, Maine, are typical subjects. Through Nov. 27. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

Ken Price—Small fired-clay sculptures, each consisting of an amorphous lump out of which a geometric section has been surgically removed and the clean-cut planes of the scar painted a bright color. Through Nov. 23. (Willard, 29 E. 72nd St.)

Emilio Sanchez—*Paintings in which the Man*hattan skyline is reduced to buildings of rectangles and squares. Through Nov. 23. (ACA, 21 E. 67th St.)

Raphael Soyer—At the age of eighty-six, this social realist still finds new facets of interest in figure painting, most often of a model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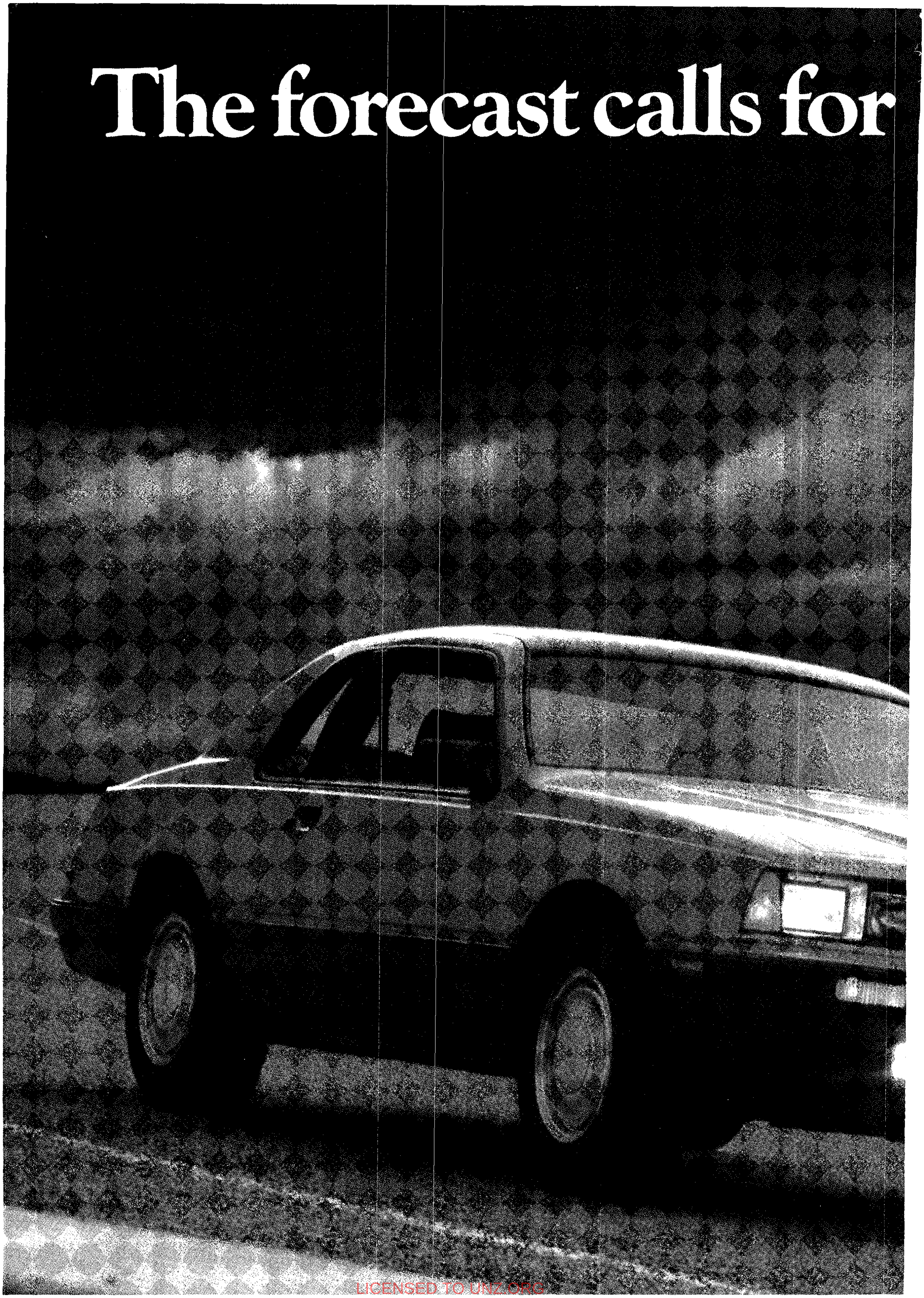
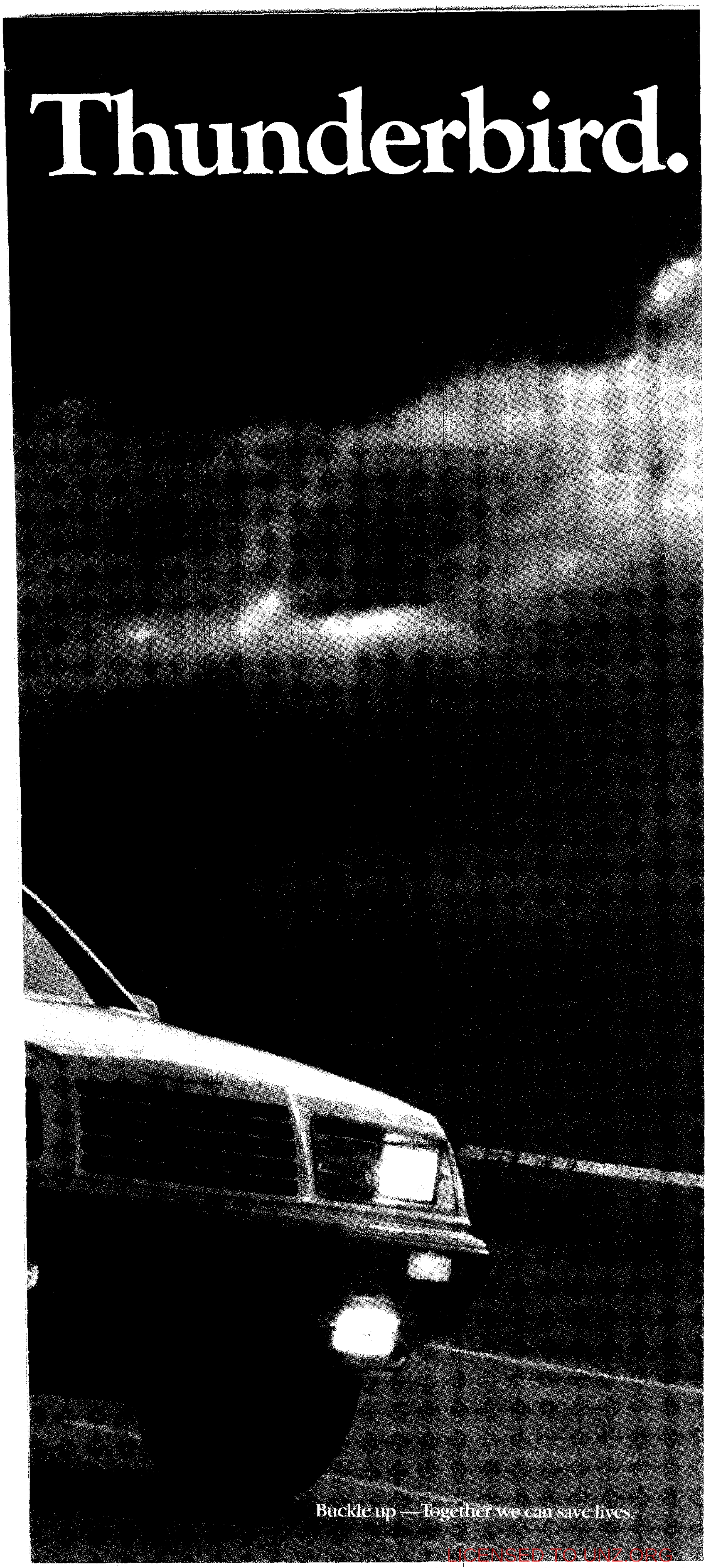

The forecast calls for



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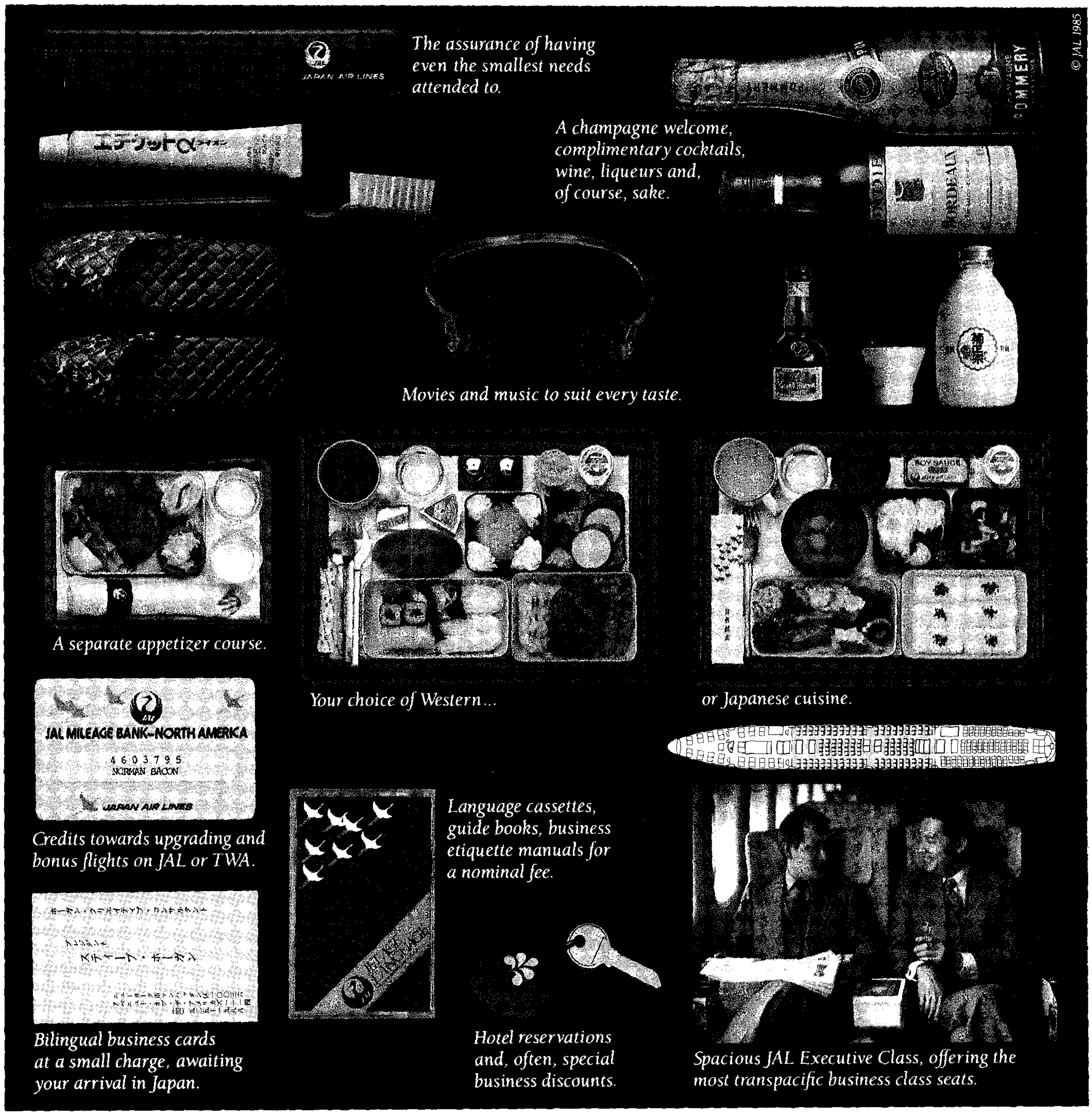
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

either taking off her clothes or putting them on. Through Saturday, Nov. 9. (Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864-1901)—Drawings and watercolors from a collection owned by the artist's family. Through Dec. 6. (French Embassy, 972 Fifth Ave., at 78th St. Open daily; opens at noon Saturdays and Sundays. A larger exhibition will open at the Museum of Modern Art on Thursday, Nov. 7.)

Tom Wesselmann—Small paintings and collages from throughout his career. Through Dec. 7. (Hoffeld, 1020 Madison Ave., at 79th St. Open Mondays.)

Troels Woersel—Paintings, drawings, and prints from 1979 to the present. Through Nov. 30. (Kren, 22 E. 65th St.)

Group Shows—At **la boetie,** 9 E. 82nd St.: Drawings by twentieth-century Europeans, including Klee, Klimt, Schwitters, and Balthus. Through Dec. 31. . . . **colnaghi,** 26 E. 80th St.: European paintings, 1550 to 1800. Through Dec. 7. (Open Mondays.) . . . **mazoh,** 13 E. 76th St. Paintings by Americans and Europeans, including Morris Louis, Kenneth Noland, Jean Dubuffet, and Hans Hofmann. Through Dec. 14. (Open Mondays.)

Sculpture—Expressionist figures that embody the darker aspects of human experience—starvation and paranoia, for instance. By Sydney Blum, Scott Richter, Mary Ann Unger, and others. Through Nov. 30. (Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St.)

GALLERIES—57th STREET AREA

Siah Armajani—Fanciful architectural constructions. Through Nov. 30. (Protetch, 37 W. 57th St.)

Robert Barnes—Allegorical paintings. Through Saturday, Nov. 16. (Frumkin, 50 W. 57th St.)

John Buck—Sculptured wood figures, many of which are provided with a painting for a background and some of which have saw-toothed contours. Through Saturday, Nov. 9. (Lamagna, 50 W. 57th St.)

Gaston Chaissac (1910-64)—Painted-wood constructions based on the human figure and semi-abstract portraits are among the works in this artist's first retrospective in this country. Through Nov. 30. (Oscarsson Hood, 41 W. 57th St.)

Salvador Dali—Sculptures and prints from the seventies. Through Dec. 7. (Alex Rosenberg, 20 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

José de Creeft (1884-1982) / **Claude Buck** (1890-1974)—Figurative sculptures in bronze, wood, and marble, plus works on paper. / Landscape and figure paintings. Through Nov. 26. (Deutsch, 20 W. 57th St.)

Roger Dennis—Recent Impressionist landscapes of New England. Through Nov. 29. (Shippee, 41 E. 57th St.)

José de Rivera (1904-85)—A memorial show of about two dozen sculptures, many on revolving bases. Through Nov. 20. (Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Anne Dunn / Leigh Behnke—Loosely handled paintings of studio interiors and landscapes of New Brunswick, Canada. / Realist paintings on multiple panels—cityscapes, interiors, still-lifes. Through Nov. 27. (Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Alberto Giacometti (1901-66)—Paintings, sculptures, and drawings, eighty-three works in all. Through Saturday, Nov. 9. (Janis, 110 W. 57th St.)

William Glackens (1870-1938)—Landscapes, figure sketches, and magazine illustrations. Through Nov. 23. (Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

John Stuart Ingle—Watercolors of cattleya orchids, fancy chocolates, and ripe pears. Through Nov. 30. (Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St.)

Minoru Kawabata / Peter Bellamy—Sharper color contrasts and stronger compositions mark these large new paintings. / Black-and-white photographs of artists who work in New York, among them Richard Artschwager, Elizabeth Murray, Susan Rothenberg, and Raphael Soyer. Through Nov. 23. (Tilton, 24 W. 57th St.)

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Norman Lewis (1909-79)—Abstract paintings. Through Nov. 30. (Ross, 162 W. 56th St.)

Winifred Lutz—Handmade paper-and-wood sculptures. Through Saturday, Nov. 9. (Pearl, 38 E. 57th St.)

Henry Moore—Sculptures, drawings, and prints. Through Nov. 29. (Dorsky, 58 W. 58th St. Open Mondays.)

Isamu Noguchi—Bronze sculptures, dating from 1959 to 1962, in which the artist manages to express both lightness and weight; the pieces were created in balsa wood and then cast in bronze. Through Dec. 14. (Herstand, 24 W. 57th St.)

Kenneth Noland / John Graham (1881-1961)—Paintings from the sixties, when he concentrated on chevrons and horizontal stripes. Through Nov. 30. / Portrait drawings, about half of them stately female beauties with unfortunately crossed eyes. Through Nov. 23. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

Doug Ohlson—A two-gallery exhibit. Works on paper from the past five years. (Zarre, 41 E. 57th St.) . . . ¶ Recent paintings. (Siegel, 24 W. 57th St.) Both through Saturday, Nov. 9.

Edda Renouf / David Deutsch—Abstract paintings and drawings. Through Nov. 26. / New paintings. Through Nov. 30. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

Tony Robbin—Blue and red lights shine on and are considered an integral part of a geometric wall sculpture. Through Wednesday, Nov. 13. (De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St.)

Livio Saganić—Carved-slate sculptures. Through Dec. 4. (Armstrong, 50 W. 57th St.)

Lucas Samaras—Expressionist paintings of art-world dealers and critics—at their most unflattering. Through Saturday, Nov. 16. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

John Seery—Flower paintings by an Expressionist. Through Dec. 7. (Gruenebaum, 38 E. 57th St.)

George Stubbs (1724-1806)—Intaglio prints, some finished with watercolors. Through Dec. 28. (Donson, 24 W. 57th St.)

William Thon—Paintings of Italy, including a series of the abandoned Villa Orsini, in Bomarzo. Through Dec. 7. (Midtown, 11 E. 57th St.)

William Tucker—Three large bronzes (abstractions, but obviously inspired by gymnasts' movements) and their preparatory charcoal drawings. Through Nov. 30. (McKee, 41 E. 57th St.)

Jerome Witkin—Realist paintings. Through Nov. 30. (French, 41 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Takako Yamaguchi—New paintings on paper. Through Nov. 30. (Markel, 50 W. 57th St.)

Group Shows—At the **marisa del re,** 41 E. 57th St.: Abstract paintings from the fifties by American artists, among them Helen Frankenthaler, Mark Rothko, Barnett Newman, Frank Stella, and Clyfford Still. Through Dec. 21. . . . **galerie st. etienne,** 24 W. 57th St.: Drawings and watercolors by early-twentieth-century European Expressionists, such as Oskar Kokoschka, Egon Schiele, and George Grosz. Through Nov. 23. . . . **kennedy,** 40 W. 57th St.: Twenty-four American paintings, the earliest completed in 1763 by John Singleton Copley and the most recent, by Jack Levine, this year. Through Dec. 7. . . . **schoelkopf,** 50 W. 57th St.: "American Wood Carvers," a show that juxtaposes ships' figureheads by commercial artists and contemporary sculptures by such artists as Elie Nadelman, Louise Kruger, and Raoul Hague. Through Dec. 4.

GALLERIES—SoHo

Calvin Albert—Abstract terra-cotta sculptures and charcoal drawings. Through Nov. 30. (Ingber, 415 West Broadway.)

Wendell Castle—Thirteen working long-case wood clocks, inlaid with silver and mother-of-pearl. Through Dec. 20. (Milliken, 98 Prince St.)

Dale Chihuly—New glass sculptures. Through Nov. 30. (Cowles, 420 West Broadway.)

Elaine Lustig Cohen / Candida Alvarez—Large paintings of lively geometric abstractions, plus wood constructions and works on paper. / Works on paper, sometimes collaged, dealing with the mores of Spanish Harlem. Through Nov. 23. (Exit Art, 578 Broadway. Opens at noon.)

René Daniels—Paintings. Through Nov. 30. (Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St.)

Gianni Dessì—Huge abstract works, most of them done in a thick, murky white and some of them slashed, leaving a strip of canvas hanging out. Through Saturday, Nov. 9. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St.)

Jacques Flèchemuller—Good-natured paintings with figures and objects suggested by geometric shapes. Through Saturday, Nov. 16. (Plumb, 81 Greene St.)

Hamish Fulton—The artist says his works (photographs with texts) are "about the experience of walking." Through Nov. 23. (Weber, 142 Greene St.)

Vincent Gallo—Antique-looking still-lifes painted on sheets of found metal which have been scarred and treated with acid by the artist, who incorporated the resulting disfigurations into the picture. Through Thursday, Nov. 14. (Nosei, 100 Prince St.)

Keith Haring—Two shows of his rambunctious cartoon characters. Paintings on large, unstretched canvas, through Nov. 30, at Shafrazi, 163 Mercer St., and four massive steel and aluminum sculptures in bright colors, through Saturday, Nov. 16, at Castelli, 142 Greene St., where the artist has painted the walls to look like a playground.

Christopher James—Watercolors of women in bathhouses. Through Dec. 7. (Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

Susan Laufer—Simplified forms seen against heavily worked and built-up surfaces of mixed mediums on wood. Through Saturday, Nov. 16. (Germans van Eck, 420 West Broadway.)

Clayton Patterson—Small, figurative watercolors. Through Nov. 30. (Herlin, 68 Thompson St. Open Mondays.)

A. R. Penck—New paintings. Through Nov. 30. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

Frank Roth / Anthony De Blasi—Abstract paintings. / Works that consist entirely of different-colored paints, layered one on top of the other, leaving out a canvas ground altogether. Through Nov. 23. (Meisel, 141 Prince St.)

Jonathan Santlofer—Abstract paintings, with some sections in relief. Through Nov. 27. (Pam Adler, 578 Broadway.)

Rosa Silverman / Marilynne Herbert—Abstract paintings and complementary ceramic sculptures. / Documentary photographs of children who live in New York welfare hotels. Through Nov. 24. (Pindar, 127 Greene St. Opens Sundays at 1.)

Tony Smith (1912-80)—"Die" (steel), "The Elevens Are Up" and "The Wall" (both wood mockups), and small bronzes by a Minimal-

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

ist sculptor. Through Saturday, Nov. 16. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

Imants Tillers—Wholesale borrowings from other artists—de Chirico and Jackson Pollock, for instance—are assembled in these imposing works, made up of small paintings on rectangular canvas boards, pieced together like mosaics. Through Nov. 20. (Cutler, 164 Mercer St.)

Alan Uglow—Geometric abstract paintings, one a diptych in which the panels hang on opposite walls. Through Saturday, Nov. 16. (Lorence-Monk, 568 Broadway.)

Steve Wood—Abstract sculptures made of large splinters of wood bunched together and sometimes covered with a polyester skin. Through Saturday, Nov. 16. (Baskerville+Watson, 578 Broadway.)

Group Show—Drawings and paintings by Russian artists associated with the abstract movement Suprematism, among them Malevich, Rodchenko, Chashnik, and Tatlin. Through Saturday, Nov. 9. (Esman, 70 Greene St.)

OTHER GALLERIES

Duncan Hannah—Representational oils. Through Saturday, Nov. 9. (Gallery Lafayette, 430 Lafayette St. Tuesdays through Saturdays, 1 to 7.)

Jody Pinto—Two shows. Paintings on paper. Through Saturday, Nov. 16. (Bromm, 170 Avenue A, at 11th St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.) . . . ¶ An outdoor sculpture. Through Dec. 30. (Hammarskjöld Plaza Sculpture Garden, Second Ave. at 47th St.)

Maura Sheehan—Paintings of Greek vases done on salvaged automobile windshields and lined up against a wall. The model for the paintings was a small Corinthian vessel. Through Saturday, Nov. 16. (Art Galaxy, 262 Mott St., just south of Houston St. Closed Tuesdays.)

Arte Povera—Organized by Germano Celant, the critic who invented the term, this is the first full-scale show in this country given to an Italian art movement that is roughly analogous to Minimalism and Conceptualism. The works of twelve artists occupy every space of the not exactly confining P.S. 1. Through Dec. 15. (46-01 21st St., Long Island City. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Lewis Baltz—Silver-gelatin prints that are his largest to date—twenty inches by twenty-four. Through Saturday, Nov. 9. (Castelli Graphics, 4 E. 77th St.)

Mike Disfarmer (1884-1959) **and Bill Burke**—Photographs of the rural South taken during the nineteen-forties by the former and in 1979 by the latter. Through Saturday, Nov. 9. (Staley-Wise, 177 Prince St. Opens at noon.)

William Eggleston and William Christenberry—The rural South again. These color prints, primarily, reflect the two artists' long association with one another and their affection for the area. Through Nov. 27. (Burden, 20 E. 23rd St. Opens at 1.)

Jan Groover—Still-lifes and large-format portraits. Through Nov. 23. (Robert Miller, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Fernand Fonssagrives—Fashion photographs from the forties, fifties, and sixties. Through Dec. 7. (Neikrug, 224 E. 68th St. Opens at 1 Wednesdays through Saturdays.)

Florence Henri (1893-1983)—More than fifty prints by a European Bauhaus-connected photographer, including still-lifes and portraits (of Kandinsky and Arp, among others). Through Nov. 30. (Wolf, 30 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

William Klein—People at the beach seen very close up, backstage views of Paris fashion shows, and street scenes. Through Nov. 23. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Joel Meyerowitz—"A Summer's Day," the title for a show of beach scenes which will be mounted by the Brooklyn Museum. See below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

Nic Nicosia / Timothy Greenfield-Sanders—Studio portraits of subjects more commonly seen in snapshots—fishermen, cowboys, a guy at the beach. / A series called "The New Irascibles," photographs based on the well-known 1951 portrayal of Abstract Expressionist painters. The cast this time is made up of lower East Side dealers and artists. Through Nov. 22. (Pfeifer, 568 Broadway.)

Richard Prince—New work by an artist whose photographs are of newspaper and magazine pictures. Through Dec. 1. (International with Monument, 111 E. 7th St. Opens daily, except Mondays, at noon.)

Man Ray (1890-1976)—Photographs and photogravures. Through Friday, Nov. 15. (Light, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Raghubir Singh / Charles Sheeler (1883-1965)—Photographs of India (rural and urban) at its *most seductively beautiful. / Ten vintage* silver-gelatin prints. Through Saturday, Nov. 16. (Pace-MacGill, 11 E. 57th St.)

Group Shows—At **the museum of modern art,** 11 W. 53rd St.: A selection of self-portraits from the wet-plate era right up to Polaroids, by more than forty photographers (Nadar, Stieglitz, Outerbridge, Ray, Wegman, Samaras, Sherman). See below, under "Museums," for dates and times. . . . **303 gallery,** 303 Park Ave. S., at 23rd St.: Works by Jeff Koons, James Casebere, and Larry Johnson. Through Nov. 30. (Opens at 1.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—A gilded French rococo carriage, decorated with paintings from the studio of Boucher, and Rubens' monumental painting "The Assumption of the Virgin" set the tone of an elaborate show of art works acquired or commissioned by the Princes of Liechtenstein between the sixteenth century and the nineteenth. Ornate firearms in the collection occupy one gallery. . . . ¶ A seventeenth-century imperial Mughal tent is the centerpiece of a wide-ranging exhibition of Indian art, *numbering more than three hundred objects* of religious and secular derivation. Through Jan. 5. . . . ¶ Seventy paintings and drawings by John Frederick Kensett, a nineteenth-century landscapist linked to Luminism. Through Jan. 19. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—An exhibit of lithographs and posters, mainly, by Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, all from his last ten years. Starts Thursday, Nov. 7. A complementary show is at the French Embassy, 972 Fifth Ave., at 78th St. . . . ¶ The Riklis collection of geometric abstract paintings, drawings, and sculptures has come the mu*seum's way, and selections from it are the nu*cleus of an exhibit that follows this aspect of abstraction from European Cubism and Constructivism right up to American Minimalism. Through Jan. 7. . . . **photography:** A show of nineteenth- and twentieth-century self-portraits. Starts Thursday, Nov. 7. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The permanent collection is the primary reason for a visit right now. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—An exhibit that examines American decorative and industrial design in this century, with examples extending from a Frank Lloyd Wright dining set, never exhibited before, to an Apple IIc personal computer. Through Feb. 16. . . . ¶ A Ralston Crawford (1906-78) retrospective includes paintings, drawings, photographs, and lithographs. Through Feb. 2. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—Sixty sculptures by ten artists who have their studios in Brooklyn, among them Judy Pfaff and Ray Rapp. Through Jan. 6. . . . ¶ A display of abstractions painted on cigar-box lids by Richard Diebenkorn in the late seventies. Through Dec. 2. . . . **photography:** Prints by Joel Meyerowitz. Starts Friday, Nov. 8. (Open daily except Tuesdays. Hours: Mon-

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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days, except Veterans Day, and Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6; Veterans Day, 1 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—Architectural drawings and photographs of the archeological site of Vijayanagara, one of the best preserved Hindu ruins of ancient India. Through Jan. 26. (Open daily. Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

Asia Society, 725 Park Ave., at 70th St.—Paintings, illustrated manuscripts, carpets, and other works from a productive period in Indian art masterminded by the sixteenth-century Mughal emperor Akbar. Through Jan. 5. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 5.)

China Institute, 125 E. 65th St.—Rocks (lapis lazuli, soapstone, malachite) and paintings depicting rocks (on hand-scrolls, hanging scrolls, album leaves, fans) in a show underscoring the significance of the rock in Chinese culture. Through Jan. 26. (Open daily except Veterans Day. Hours: Mondays, except Veterans Day, through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, 2 to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—An exhibit of modern Finnish glass. Through Jan. 5. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Grolier Club, 47 E. 60th St.—Ezra Pound (born October 30, 1885) and his life's work are the topic of a show of first editions, autograph manuscripts, poems by authors he edited, and even carbon copies of two of the radio broadcasts he made in Italy. Through Nov. 30. (Open daily, except Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Japan House, 333 E. 47th St.—A display of seventy-six *kawari kabuto*, Japanese helmets worn by warlords between the sixteenth century and the nineteenth and distinguished not so much by their protective capacity as by their daring, highly individualistic designs: a crouching rabbit, a boy's topknot, a morning glory, and so forth. Through Nov. 27. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—An exhibit of paintings, drawings, and sculptures by the community of immigrant Jewish artists who moved to the Montparnasse section of Paris in the first half of this century: Chagall, Modigliani, Zadkine, Sonja Delaunay, and others. Through Feb. 2. (Open daily except Fridays and Saturdays. Hours: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—A show of drawings and watercolors from the Thaw collection, representing such artists as Rembrandt, Mantegna, van Gogh, Degas, and Klee. Also from that collection, a small selection of bronzes, silversmith works, and oil paintings. Through Sunday, Nov. 10. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Museum of American Folk Art, 125 W. 55th St.—An exhibit of sixty paintings by American naïve artists of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, among them Ammi Phillips, Erastus Salisbury Field, and Edward Hicks. From the collection given to the National Gallery of Art by Edgar William and Bernice Chrysler Garbisch. Through Dec. 1. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10:30 to 8, with no admission charge after 5:30; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10:30 to 5:30.)

National Academy of Design, 1083 Fifth Ave., at 89th St.—A display of fifty seventeenth-century Dutch paintings, by Rembrandt, Jan Steen, Aelbert Cuyp, and others, on loan from the Bredius Museum in the Netherlands. Starts Friday, Nov. 8. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—"Ten Centuries of Spanish Books," an exhibition of illuminated manuscripts, first editions and manuscripts, maps, and prints, including an eleventh-century Book of Hours belonging to King Ferdinand I, a first edition of "Don Quixote," and poems in the hand of García Lorca. On loan from Spanish libraries. Through Dec. 30. (Open daily, except Sundays and Veterans Day, 10 to 6.)

ART AFTER DARK

(Performance, music, dance, video, film, and combinations thereof.)

Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin St. 925-4671—Percy Cubas (dance), Thursday, Nov. 7, at 8:30; David Wheeler (performance), Thursday, Nov. 14, at 8:30.

P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288—Dan Froot (performance), Friday through Sunday, Nov. 8-10, at 9; Bebe Miller (dance), Friday through Sunday, Nov. 15-17, at 9.

MUSIC

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Alice Tully Hall 362-1911; for Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424; for the Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave., 1-718 636-4100; for Carnegie Hall 247-7800; for Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St., 570-3949; for Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St., 427-4410; and for Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—Wednesday, Nov. 6, at 8: "Porgy and Bess," with Roberta Alexander, Myra Merritt, Veronica Tyler, Charles Williams, and Simon Estes; conducted by James Levine. . . . ¶ Thursday, Nov. 7, at 8: "La Traviata," with Barbara Daniels, Luis Lima, and Leo Nucci; Thomas Fulton. . . . ¶ Friday, Nov. 8, at 8: "Cavalleria Rusticana," with Hildegard Behrens, Isola Jones, Vasile Moldoveanu, and Richard J. Clark; and "Pagliacci," with Jeannette Pilou, Ernesto Veronelli, and Sherrill Milnes. Garcia Navarro conducting both. . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 9, at 1: "Khovanshchina," with Natalia Rom, Florence Quivar, Aage Haugland, and Martti Talvela; Neeme Järvi. . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 9, at 8: "Porgy and Bess," with Roberta Alexander, Myra Merritt, Veronica Tyler, Charles Williams, and Robert Mosley; James Levine. . . . ¶ Monday, Nov. 11, at 8: "La Traviata," with Barbara Daniels, Luis Lima, and Leo Nucci; Thomas Fulton. . . . ¶ Tuesday, Nov. 12, at 8: "Porgy and Bess," with Roberta Alexander, Myra Merritt, Veronica Tyler, Charles Williams, and Simon Estes; James Levine. . . . ¶ Wednesday, Nov. 13, at 8: "Cavalleria Rusticana," with Hildegard Behrens, Isola Jones, Vasile Moldoveanu, and Richard J. Clark; and "Pagliacci," with Jeannette Pilou, Ernesto Veronelli, and Sherrill Milnes. Garcia Navarro conducting both. . . . ¶ Thursday, Nov. 14, at 8: "Khovanshchina," with Natalia Rom, Florence Quivar, Aage Haugland, and Martti Talvela; Neeme Järvi. . . . ¶ Friday, Nov. 15, at 8: "La Traviata," with Rosario Andrade, Luis Lima, and Leo Nucci; Thomas Fulton. . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 16, at 2: "Cavalleria Rusticana," with Hildegard Behrens, Isola Jones, Vasile Moldoveanu, and Richard J. Clark; and "Pagliacci," with Jeannette Pilou, Ernesto Veronelli, and George Fortune. Garcia Navarro conducting both. . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 16, at 8: "Porgy and Bess," with Roberta Alexander, Myra Merritt, Karen Williams, Charles Williams, and Robert Mosley; James Levine.

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New York City Opera—Wednesday, Nov. 6, at 8: "Norma," with Suzanne Murphy, Judith Forst, Robert Grayson, and Jeffrey Wells; conducted by Richard Bonynge. . . . ¶ Thursday and Friday, Nov. 7-8, at 8, and Saturday, Nov. 9, at 2: "Akhnaten" (in Akkadian, Egyptian, and Hebrew, with an English narration), with Claudia Cummings, Cynthia Rose, and Christopher Robson; Christopher Keene. . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 9, at 8: "La Rondine," with Elizabeth Knighton, Claudette Peterson, Jon Garrison, and David Eisler; Alessandro Siciliani. . . . ¶ Sunday, Nov. 10, at 1: "Casanova," with Carol Gutknecht, Susanne Marsee, Joyce Castle, Timothy Nolen, and David Hamilton; Scott Bergeson. . . . ¶ Sunday, Nov. 10, at 7: "Madame Butterfly," with Louisa Jonason, Jane Shaulis, John Absalom, and Adib Fazah; Christopher Keene. . . . ¶ Tuesday, Nov. 12, at 8: "Casanova," with Carol Gutknecht, Susanne Marsee, Joyce Castle, Timothy Nolen, and David Hamilton; Scott Bergeson. . . . ¶ Wednesday, Nov. 13, at 8, and Saturday, Nov. 16, at 2: "Kismet," with Michele McBride, Joyce Castle, Mark Thomsen, and Theodore Baerg; Scott Bergeson. . . . ¶ Thursday through Saturday, Nov. 14-16, at 8: "Kismet," with Maryanne Telese, Susanne Marsee, Cris Groenendaal, and George Hearn; Scott Bergeson. (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through Sunday, Nov. 17.)

Amato Opera Company—Mozart's "The Marriage of Figaro," in English. (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. Saturdays, and Friday, Nov. 15, at 7:30, and Sundays at 2:30.)

Opera Ensemble of New York—Michael Recchiuti conducting the first two of six performances of Robert Ward's "The Crucible," an opera based on the play by Arthur Miller. Staged by John J. D. Sheehan. (Lillie Blake School Theatre, 45 E. 81st St. Wednesday, Nov. 13, and Friday, Nov. 15, at 8. For information about tickets, call 288-1485.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall, Zubin Mehta conducting—Thursday, Nov. 7, at 8; Friday, Nov. 8, at 2; Saturday, Nov. 9, at 8; and Tuesday, Nov. 12, at 7:30: A Lutoslawski-Brahms program, with Maurizio Pollini, piano. . . . ¶ Thursday, Nov. 14, at 8; Friday, Nov. 15, at 2; and Tuesday, Nov. 19, at 7:30: An all-Copland program, honoring the composer's eighty-fifth birthday, with Bennett Lerner, piano.

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande—At Carnegie Hall, Armin Jordan conducting—Thursday, Nov. 7, at 8: With Horacio Gutiérrez, piano, and Florence Quivar, mezzo-soprano. . . . ¶ Friday, Nov. 8, at 8: With Heinz Holliger, oboist-composer and guest conductor.

New Irish Chamber Orchestra—Proinnsías Ó Duinn conducting, with John O'Conor, piano. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium. Friday, Nov. 8, at 8.)

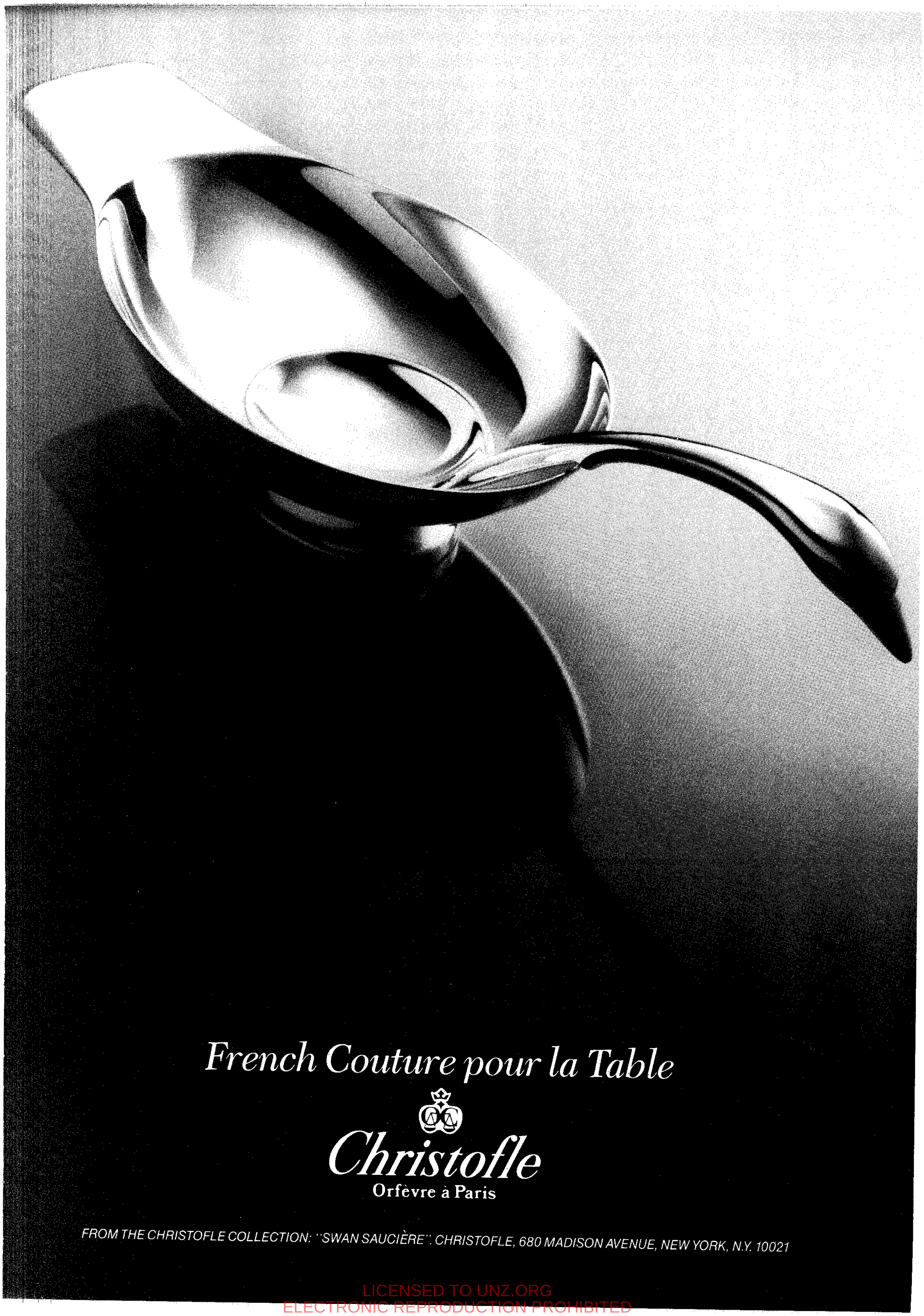
Houston Symphony Orchestra—Sergiu Comissiona conducting, with Emanuel Ax, piano. (Carnegie Hall. Saturday, Nov. 16, at 8.)

Orchestra of St. Luke's—Alexander Schneider conducting, with Peter Serkin, piano. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium. Thursday, Nov. 7, at 8.)

Symphony Orchestra of the Curtis Institute of Music—Louis Lane conducting an all-Beethoven program, with Daniel Heifetz, violin. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, Nov. 9, at 3.)

Tribute to Aaron Copland—Morton Gould conducting the American Symphony Orchestra, with Ezio Flagello, bass, and with Walter Cronkite narrating "A Lincoln Portrait." (Felt Forum, Madison Square Garden. 564-4400. Wednesday, Nov. 13, and Friday, Nov. 15, at 8.)

Brooklyn Philharmonic—Lukas Foss conducting a program that includes the New York première of a work by Hindemith, with Youri


French Couture pour la Table
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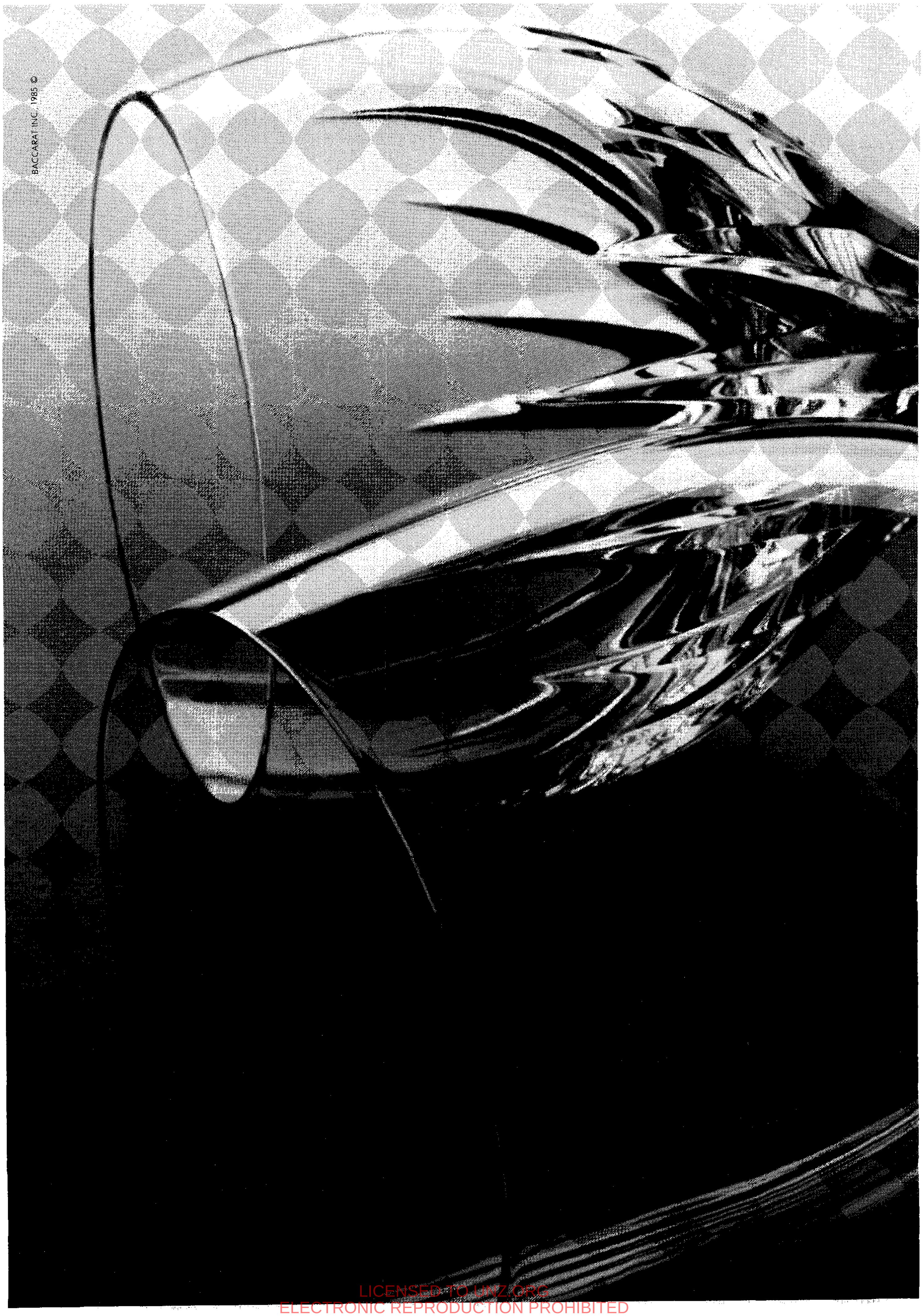

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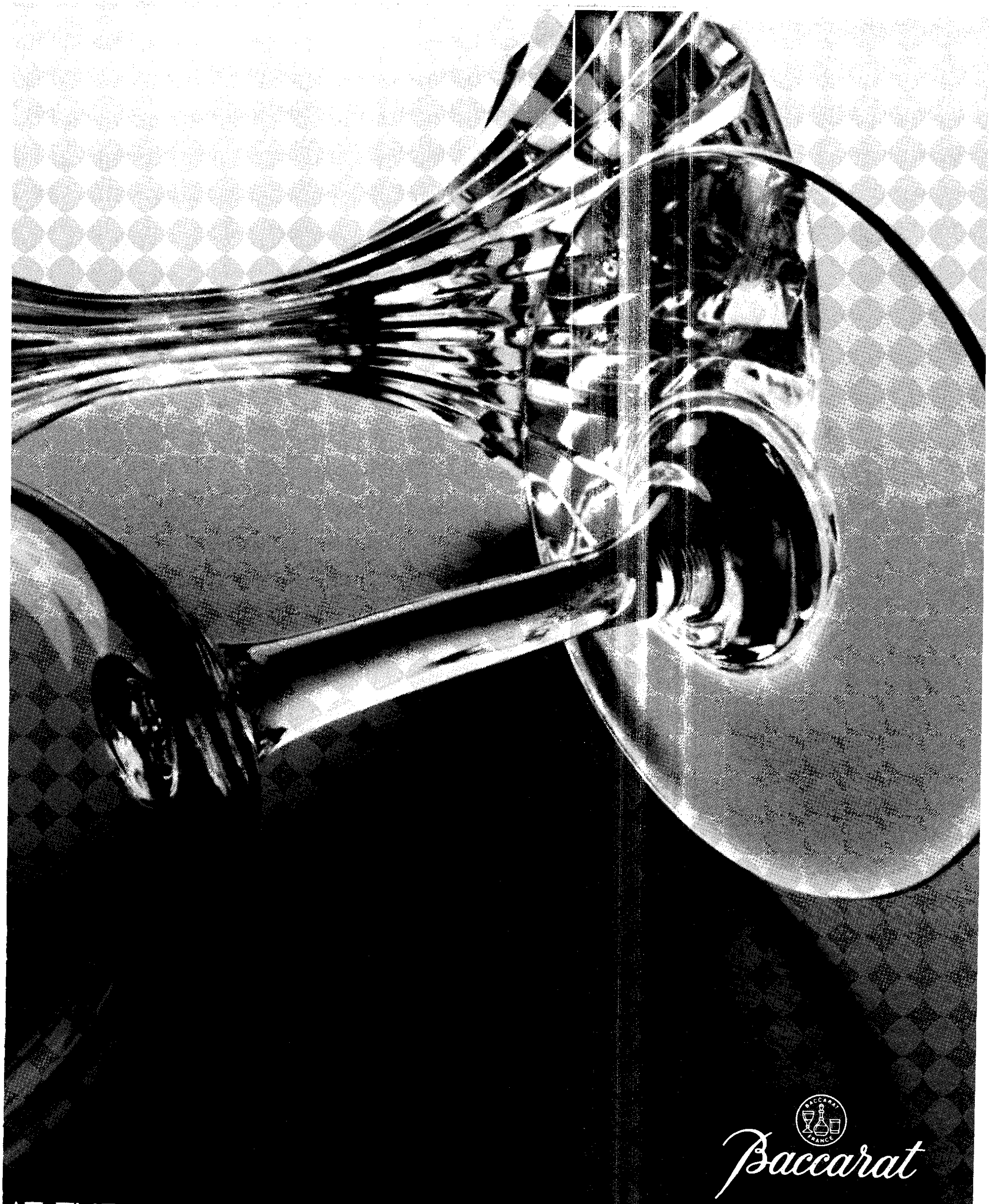
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Egorov, piano. The opening performances of the regular season. (Brooklyn Academy of Music. Friday and Saturday, Nov. 15-16, at 8, and Sunday, Nov. 17, at 2.)

Gregg Smith Singers—Gregg Smith directing the second in a series of four programs, this one devoted to American music. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Saturday, Nov. 9, at 8:30. For information about tickets, call 874-2990.)

Newark Boys Chorus—Margaret Harris directing a program of American music, mostly. (Brick Presbyterian Church, Park Ave. at 91st St. Sunday, Nov. 10, at 4. Admission by contribution.)

RECITALS

Victoria de los Angeles—Soprano, with Joseph Villa, piano. (Kaufmann Concert Hall. Wednesday, Nov. 6, at 8.)

Kjell Baekkelund—Piano. (Alice Tully Hall. Wednesday, Nov. 6, at 8.)

League-ISCM—With Linda Moss, viola; Michael Willens, contrabass; Charles Neidich, clarinet; and Christopher Oldfather, piano. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Wednesday, Nov. 6, at 8.)

William Parker—Baritone, in a program of French songs. (Alice Tully Hall. Thursday, Nov. 7, at 8.)

Composers Concordance—A program of contemporary music. (Christ and St. Stephen's Church, 120 W. 69th St. Thursday, Nov. 7, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Quintet of the Americas—Presenting a program of American music, with Jack Kreiselman as conductor for the quintet and an ensemble of guest artists. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Thursday, Nov. 7, at 8. Tania León will moderate a post-concert seminar in which the composers and artists will participate.)

Carey Chow—Piano. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium. Saturday, Nov. 9, at 2:30.)

Roger Roloff—Baritone, with John van Buskirk, piano, in a one-hour program. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Saturday, Nov. 9, at 5. For information about tickets, call 874-2990.)

Nikhil Banerjee—Sitar, with Zakir Hussain, tabla, and the Langas & Manghaniyars of Rajasthan. (Carnegie Hall. Saturday, Nov. 9, at 8.)

Robert Sylvester and Robert Spillmann—Cello and piano/harpsicord. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, Nov. 9, at 8.)

Tokyo String Quartet—Chamber music. (Kaufmann Concert Hall. Saturday, Nov. 9, at 8.)

Canadian Brass Quintet—With Peter Nero, piano. (Carnegie Hall. Sunday, Nov. 10, at 2:30.)

Coleman Blumfield—Piano. (Kaufmann Concert Hall. Sunday, Nov. 10, at 3.)

Emmet G. Smith—Organ. (Park Avenue Christian Church, Park Ave. at 85th St. Sunday, Nov. 10, at 3. Admission by contribution.)

Amadeus String Quartet—Chamber music. (Alice Tully Hall. Sunday, Nov. 10, at 3.)

Music Before 1800—The second in a series of concerts, this one performed by the Baltimore Consort. (Corpus Christi Church, 529 W. 121st St. Sunday, Nov. 10, at 3. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

An die Musik—A program in memory of Judith Raskin, with Jenny Hayden Brown, soprano. (Merkin Concert Hall. Sunday, Nov. 10, at 4.)

Solomon String Quartet—Chamber music. (Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St. Sunday, Nov. 10, at 5. For tickets, call 288-0700.)

Jerry Grossman and Robert Levin—Cello and piano. (Merkin Concert Hall. Sunday, Nov. 10, at 8.)

Neal Ramsay—Saxophone. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Monday, Nov. 11, at 8.)

Robert White—Tenor, in the first of three programs honoring John McCormack. (Alice Tully Hall. Tuesday, Nov. 12, at 8.)

Erik Berchot—Piano, with Ida Kavafian, violin. (Kaufmann Concert Hall. Tuesday, Nov. 12, at 8.)

Parnassus—Contemporary chamber music. (Merkin Concert Hall. Tuesday, Nov. 12, at 8.)

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Rudolf Firkusny and Lynn Harrell—Piano and cello. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, Nov. 13, at 8.)

Edmund Niemann—Piano, with assisting artists, in a program of contemporary American music. The composer Larry Lockwood will be present. (Third Street Music School Settlement, 235 E. 11th St. 777-3240. Wednesday, Nov. 13, at 8.)

Donald Joyce—Organ, in an all-Bach program. (Church of St. John the Evangelist, First Ave. at 55th St. Thursday, Nov. 14, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Waverly Consort—A program of music by William Byrd and his contemporaries. (Alice Tully Hall. Thursday, Nov. 14, and Saturday, Nov. 16, at 8.)

Music Spectrum—The first in a series of three concerts of chamber music. (Merkin Concert Hall. Thursday, Nov. 14, at 8.)

Richard Goode—Piano. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium. Friday, Nov. 15, at 8.)

Pinchas Zukerman and Marc Neikrug—Violin/viola and piano. (Avery Fisher Hall. Friday, Nov. 15, at 8.)

"Music for a Great Space"—Paul Halley directing a program of liturgical music from eight centuries. With the Classic Brass Ensemble, the Massed Choirs of the Cathedral, and Jonathan Dimmock, organ. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. Saturday, Nov. 16, at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

Yale Chamber Music Series—The first in a series of concerts performed by various members of the Yale University School of Music. (Merkin Concert Hall. Saturday, Nov. 16, at 8.)

Chamber Music at BAM—The Ridge Quartet, with Jeffrey Kahane, piano. (Brooklyn Academy of Music. Saturday, Nov. 16, at 8:30, and Sunday, Nov. 17, at 2.)

MISCELLANY

Next Wave Festival—At the Brooklyn Academy of Music, through Sunday, Dec. 8, the third annual presentation of a series of programs of contemporary works of dance, music, theatre, and visual effects. In the **LEPERCQ SPACE**—Wednesday through Saturday, Nov. 6-9, at 8, and Sunday, Nov. 10, at 2: Reinhild Hoffmann's **TANZTHEATER BREMEN** performing her full-length work "Callas." . . . **OPERA HOUSE**—Thursday, Nov. 7, at 7; Friday and Saturday, Nov. 8-9, at 8; and Sunday, Nov. 10, at 2: **NINA WIENER AND DANCERS** in the première of a full-length work, "In Closed Time."

"Luisa Fernanda"—A Spanish zarzuela composed by Federico Moreno Torroba. (Repertorio Español, Gramercy Arts Theatre, 138 E. 27th St. 889-2850. Sunday, Nov. 10, at 3. Through Tuesday, Dec. 31.)

"Vladimir Horowitz the Last Romantic"—A film about the pianist. (Carnegie Hall. Friday, Nov. 15, at 8.)

Benefit Concert—Lukas Foss conducting the Brooklyn Philharmonic in an all-Prokofieff program, with Byron Janis, piano, and Mme. Lina Prokofieff and Oleg Prokofieff, narrators. The beneficiary is Hospital Audiences, Inc. (Alice Tully Hall. Monday, Nov. 11, at 8. For information about tickets, call 575-7676.)

SPORTS

(The box-office number for Madison Square Garden is 564-4400.)

Professional Basketball—At **MADISON SQUARE GARDEN:** Knicks vs. Milwaukee, Thursday, Nov. 7, at 7:30. . . . ¶ Knicks vs. Chicago, Saturday, Nov. 9, at 7:30. . . . ¶ Knicks vs. Phoenix, Tuesday, Nov. 12, at 8. . . . ¶ Knicks vs. Atlanta, Saturday, Nov. 16, at 7:30. . . . **BYRNE MEADOWLANDS ARENA** (1-201 935-8888): Nets vs. Chicago, Thursday, Nov. 7, at 7:30. . . . ¶ Nets vs. Milwaukee, Saturday, Nov. 9, at 7:30.

Professional Football—Giants vs. Los Angeles Rams. (Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands. Sunday, Nov. 10, at 1.)

Hockey—At **MADISON SQUARE GARDEN** (all games at 7:35): Rangers vs. Philadelphia Flyers, Wednesday, Nov. 6. . . . ¶ Rangers vs. Chicago Black Hawks, Monday, Nov. 11. . . . ¶ Rangers vs. Montreal Canadiens, Wednesday, Nov. 13. . . . **NASSAU COLISEUM:** Islanders vs. Devils, Saturday, Nov. 9, at 7:05. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Montreal Canadiens, Tuesday, Nov. 12, at 8:05. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Edmonton Oilers, Saturday, Nov. 16, at 7:05. (Hempstead Turnpike, Uniondale, L.I. 1-516 794-9100.) . . . **BYRNE MEADOWLANDS ARENA** (1-201 935-3900): Devils vs. Calgary Flames, Wednesday, Nov. 6, at 7:35. . . . ¶ Devils vs. Pittsburgh Penguins, Friday, Nov. 8, at 7:35.

Racing—At **AQUEDUCT:** Daily, except Tuesdays and Wednesday, Nov. 6, at 12:30. The Pilgrim, Saturday, Nov. 9; the Miss Grillo, Sunday, Nov. 10; the General Douglas MacArthur Handicap, Monday, Nov. 11; and the Vosburgh, Saturday, Nov. 16. . . . **MEADOWLANDS:** Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Veterans Day at 1:30; through Tuesday, Dec. 31. The Paterson, Saturday, Nov. 16.

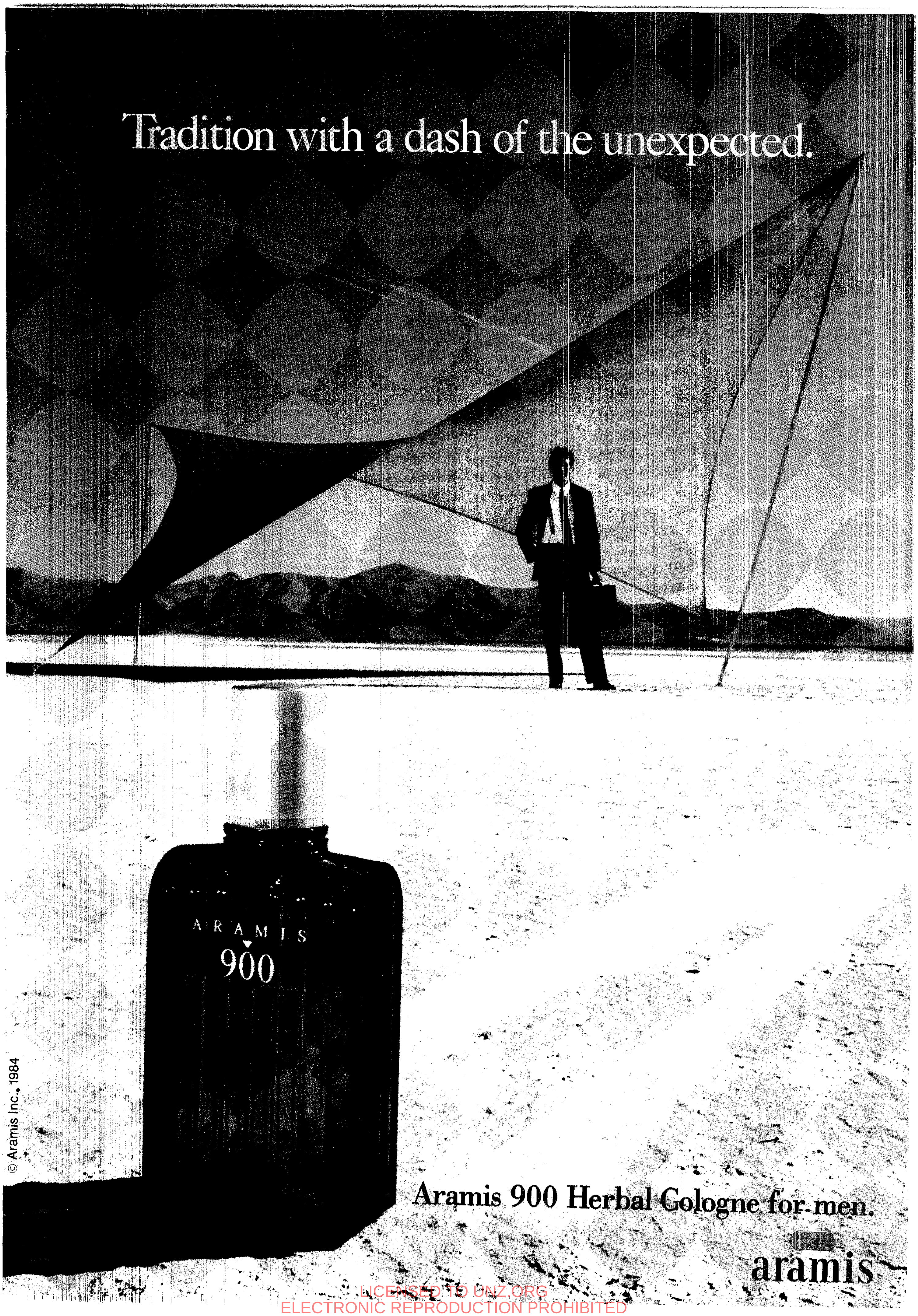
Trotting—At Roosevelt Raceway, Westbury: Weeknights at 8; through Tuesday, Dec. 31.

ET ALIA

Poetry and Prose Readings—James Merrill reading from his own poetry. (Three Lives & Company, 154 W. 10th St. Thursday, Nov. 7, at 8. No tickets necessary; seating on a first-come, first-served basis.) . . . ¶ Anthony Hecht, Karl Shapiro, and Jon Stallworthy reading from their own poetry about war and from a selection of classic war poems. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Monday, Nov. 11, at 8.) . . . ¶ Rodney Jones and Ellen Bryant Voigt reading from their own poetry. (Donnell Library, 20 W. 53rd St. Tuesday, Nov. 12, at 6. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Bernard Malamud reading from his own prose. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. Wednesday, Nov. 13, at 8. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ A benefit program for *Columbia: A Magazine of Poetry & Prose*, with Galway Kinnell, Stanley Plumly, Quincy Troupe, Joyce Johnson, David Leavitt, and Robert Stone reading from their own poetry and prose. (West Side Y, 5 W. 63rd St. Thursday, Nov. 14, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.)

Flower Show—An exhibition of Japanese chrysanthemums, including bonsai plants, in the Enid A. Haupt Conservatory at the New York Botanical Garden. (Bronx Park. Friday, Nov. 8, through Sunday, Dec. 1. Daily, 10 to 4.)

Auctions—At Sotheby's, York Ave. at 72nd St. (Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sunday, Nov. 10, from 1 to 5.)—Thursday, Nov. 7, at 2: Old Master paintings. . . . ¶ Friday, Nov. 8, at 2: French furniture, Continental porcelain, and decorations. . . . ¶ Saturday, Nov. 9, at 2: French furniture, Continental ceramics, and decorations. . . . ¶ Tuesday, Nov. 12, at 10:15 and 2: Photographs. Exhibition starts Thursday, Nov. 7, at 1. . . . ¶ Wednesday, Nov. 13, at 7: Impressionist paintings from the Albert J. Dreitzer Collection. Following the Dreitzer sale, Impressionist and modern paintings from several collectors. Exhibition starts Saturday, Nov. 9. Admission to both sales by ticket only; for information, call 606-7303.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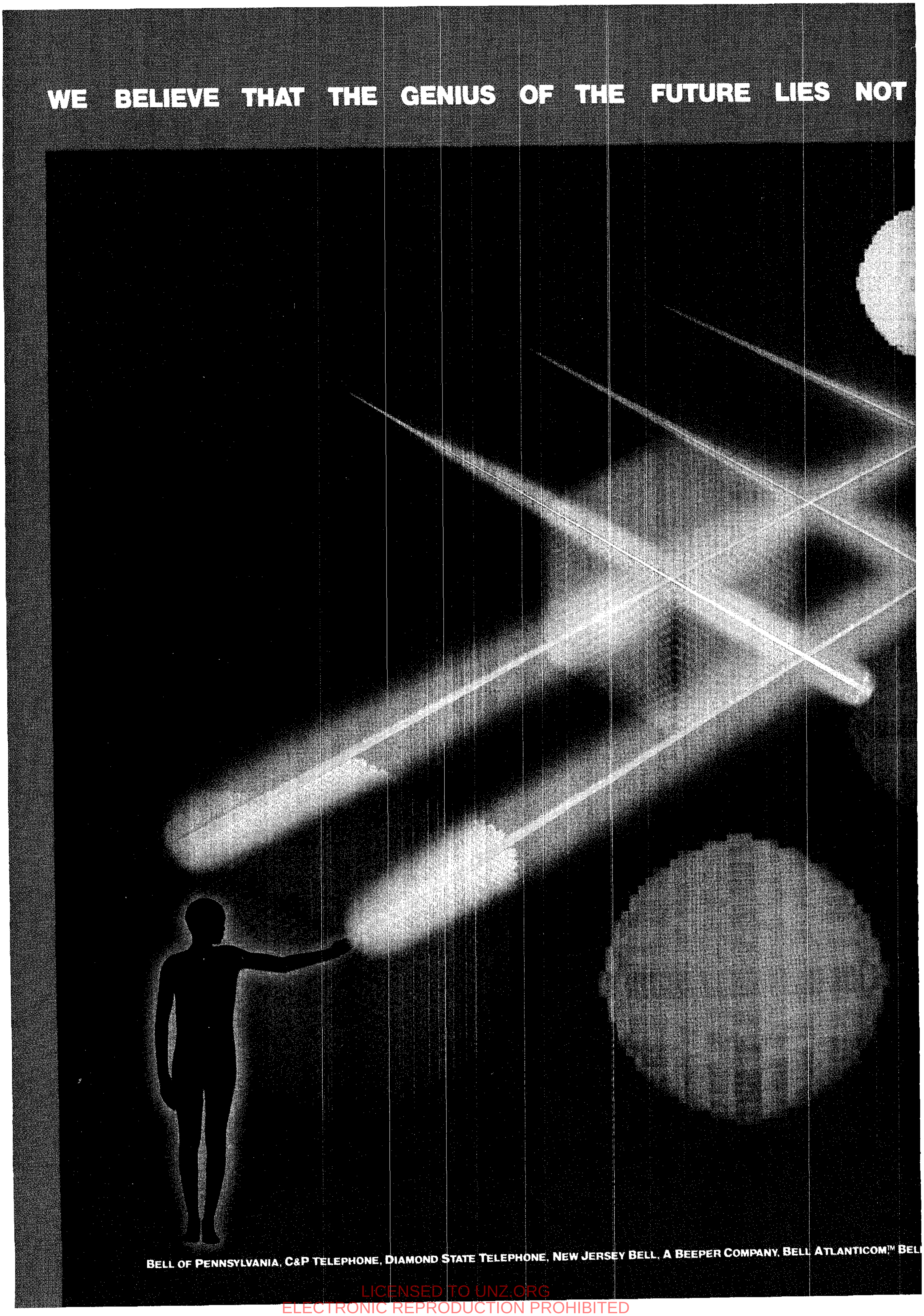
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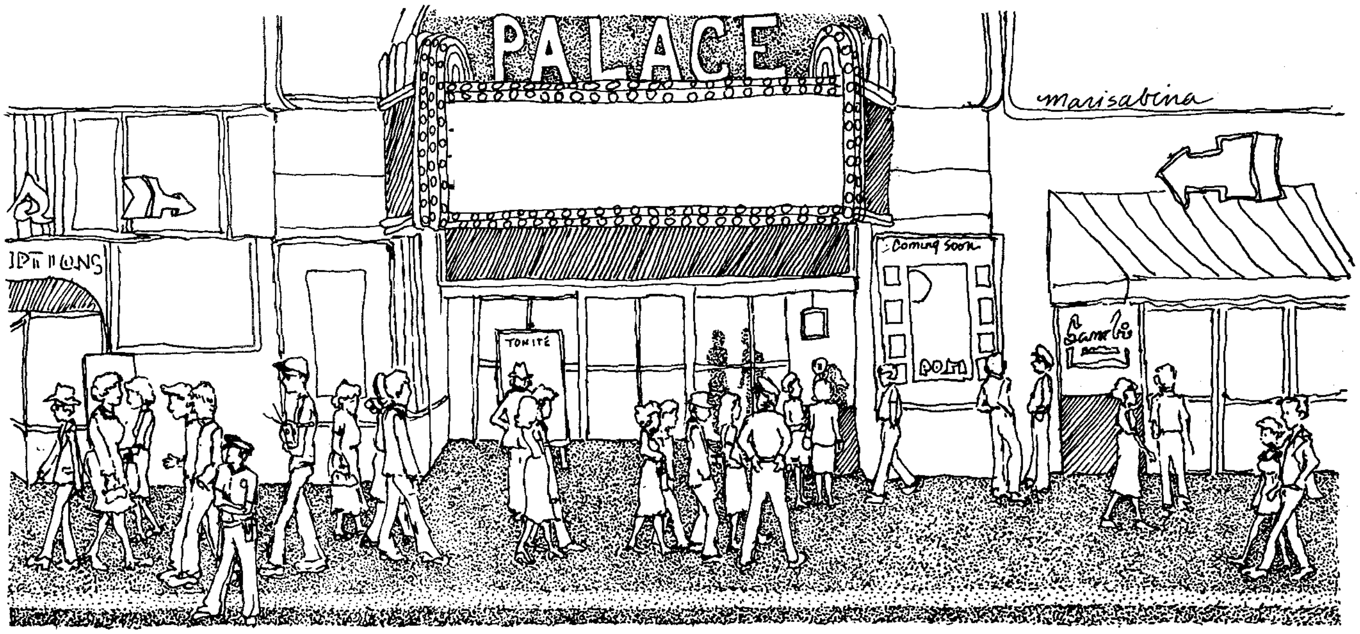
GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN



THE MOVIE HOUSES

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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 27.

EAST SIDE

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
Through Nov. 14: "Paris, Texas" (1984; directed by Wim Wenders), with Harry Dean Stanton, Nastassja Kinski, and Dean Stockwell.
From Nov. 15: "Les Plouffe" (1982; Gilles Carle; a Canadian film, in French). In addition, each night a second film by Mr. Carle will be shown.

New Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"After Hours" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"A Nightmare on Elm Street, Part 2: Freddy's Revenge" (Jack Sholder).

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (685-7652)
Through Nov. 7: "Plenty" (†).
From Nov. 8: "Target" (Arthur Penn), with Gene Hackman and Matt Dillon.

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 7: "Compromising Positions" (†). From Nov. 8: To be announced.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 7: "Marie" (†). From Nov. 8: "That Was Then . . . This Is Now" (Christopher Cain), with Emilio Estevez.
Theatre 3: Through Nov. 7: "To Live and Die in L.A." (William Friedkin), with William L. Petersen and Willem Dafoe. From Nov. 8: "TRansylvania 6-5000" (Rudy De Luca), with Jeff Goldblum and Joseph Bologna.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Jagged Edge" (†).

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
Through Nov. 7: "Back to the Future" (†).
From Nov. 8: "Dance with a Stranger" (†).

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Through Nov. 7: "After Hours" (†).
From Nov. 8: "Target" (Arthur Penn), with Gene Hackman and Matt Dillon.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"The Doctor and the Devils" (Freddie Francis), with Timothy Dalton.

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"When Father Was Away on Business" (Emir Kusturica; in Yugoslav).

Manhattan I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 7: "Krush Groove" (Michael Schultz). From Nov. 8: "After Hours" (†).
Theatre 2: "Death Wish 3" (Michael Winner), with Charles Bronson.

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Agnes of God" (Norman Jewison), with Jane Fonda, Anne Bancroft, and Meg Tilly.
Theatre 2: "Jagged Edge" (†).

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Kiss of the Spider Woman" (†).

Cinema I and II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: "Eleni" (Peter Yates), with Kate Nelligan, John Malkovich, and Linda Hunt.
Theatre 2: "Subway" (Luc Besson; in French), with Christopher Lambert and Isabelle Adjani.

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Flanagan" (Scott Goldstein), with Philip Bosco and Geraldine Page.
Theatre 2: "Sweet Dreams" (†).

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Twice in a Lifetime" (Bud Yorkin), with Gene Hackman, Ann-Margret, and Ellen Burstyn.

Loews New York Twin I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 7: "A Nightmare on Elm Street, Part 2: Freddy's Revenge" (Jack Sholder). From Nov. 8: To be announced.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 7: "Marie" (†). From Nov. 8: "That Was Then . . . This Is Now" (Christopher Cain), with Emilio Estevez.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"The Gods Must Be Crazy" (1979; Jamie Uys).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Macaroni" (Ettore Scola), with Jack Lemmon and Marcello Mastroianni.

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Death Wish 3" (Michael Winner), with Charles Bronson.

Loews Orpheum I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 7: "To Live and Die in L.A." (William Friedkin), with William L. Petersen and Willem Dafoe. From Nov. 8: To be announced.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 7: "Remo Williams: The Adventure Begins" (Guy Hamilton), with Fred Ward and Joel Grey. From Nov. 8: "TRansylvania 6-5000" (Rudy De Luca), with Jeff Goldblum and Joseph Bologna.

86th St. East, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
"A Nightmare on Elm Street, Part 2: Freddy's Revenge" (Jack Sholder).

R.K.O. Century 86th St. Twin, Lexington at 86th. (289-8900)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 7: "Krush Groove" (Michael Schultz). From Nov. 8: To be announced.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 7: "Commando" (Mark Lester), with Arnold Schwarzenegger. From Nov. 8: To be announced.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum I and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 12: "Living at Risk" (directed by Alfred Guzzetti, Susan Meiselas, and Richard Rogers; in Spanish and English) and "Witness to War" (Deborah Shaffer), both documentaries. From Nov. 13: "Choosing Children" (1984; Debra Chasnoff and Kim Klausner) and "Breaking Silence" (1984; Theresa Tollini), both documentaries.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 14: "Mishima: A Life in Four Chapters" (Paul Schrader; in Japanese), with Ken Ogata. From Nov. 15: "Buddies."

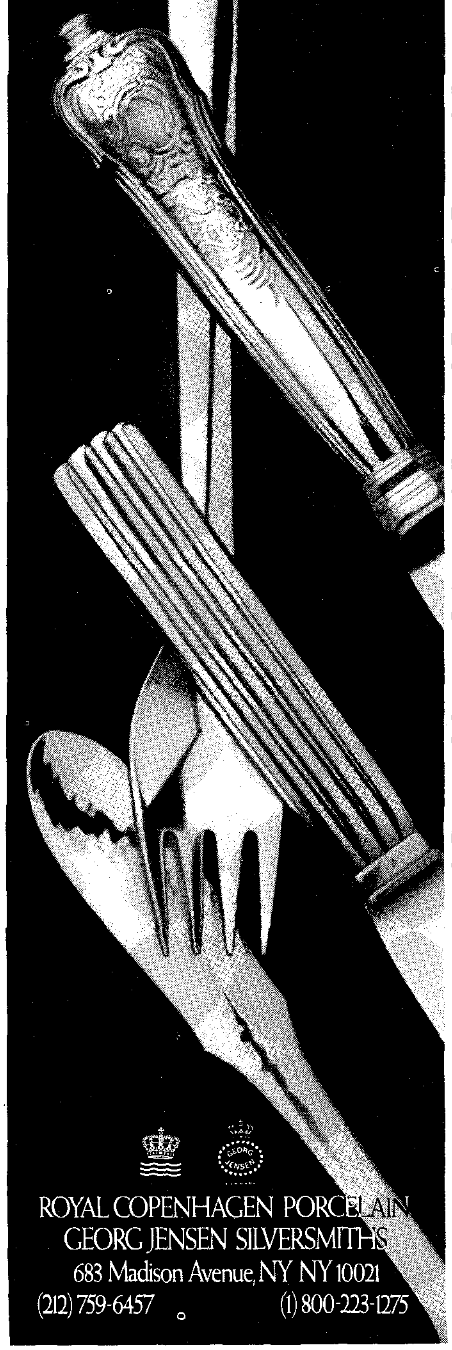
Bleecker St. Cinema I and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: "28 Up" (1984; Michael Apted), a documentary.
Theatre 2: "8½" (†).

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "El Diputado" (1969; Eloy de la Iglesia; in Spanish).
Theatre 2: "Mixed Blood" (Paul Morrissey).

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Through Nov. 7: "Morons from Outer Space" (Mike Hodges).
From Nov. 8: "Bring on the Night" (Michael Apted), a documentary, with Sting.

R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Kiss of the Spider Woman" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 7: "Krush Groove" (Michael Schultz). From Nov. 8: "Plenty" (†).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Crossover Dreams" (Leon Ichaso), with Rubén Blades.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 7: "Remo Williams: The Adventure Begins" (Guy Hamilton), with Fred Ward and Joel Grey. From Nov. 8: "Dance with a Stranger" (†).
Theatre 3: "Death Wish 3" (Michael Winner), with Charles Bronson.
Theatre 4: "La Chèvre" (Francis Véber; in



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23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "A Nightmare on Elm Street, Part 2: Freddy's Revenge" (Jack Sholder).
Theatre 2: "Sweet Dreams" (†).
Theatre 3: "Jagged Edge" (†).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Agnes of God" (Norman Jewison), with Jane Fonda, Anne Bancroft, and Meg Tilly.

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Fantasia" (†).

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (757-2715)
"Hail Mary" (Jean-Luc Godard; in French).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Colonel Redl" (István Szabó; in German), with Klaus Maria Brandauer.

New Little Carnegie, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
Nov. 7: A program of five films.
From Nov. 8: "Bring on the Night" (Michael Apted), a documentary, with Sting.

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
Through Nov. 7: "Dance with a Stranger" (†).
From Nov. 8: "The Official Story" (Luis Puenzo; in Spanish), with Norma Aleandro.

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Plenty" (†).

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
Through Nov. 7: "Compromising Positions" (†).
From Nov. 8: To be announced.

Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Kiss of the Spider Woman" (†).
Theatre 2: "A Year of the Quiet Sun" (Krzysztof Zanussi; in English and Polish).
Theatre 3: Through Nov. 7: "Sheer Madness" (Margarethe von Trotta; in German), with Hanna Schygulla and Angela Winkler. From Nov. 8: "Dance with a Stranger" (†).

Cinema Studio 1 and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "Shoah" (Claude Lanzmann), a nine-and-a-half-hour documentary. Part One will be shown daily.
Theatre 2: "Shoah." Part Two will be shown daily.

Embassy 72nd St. 1 and 2, B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 14: "La Chèvre" (Francis Véber; in French), with Gérard Depardieu and Pierre Richard. From Nov. 15: "Rasputin" (Elem Klimov; in Russian).
Theatre 2: "Sotto, Sotto" (Lina Wertmüller; in Italian).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 7: "A Nightmare on Elm Street, Part 2: Freddy's Revenge" (Jack Sholder). From Nov. 8: To be announced.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 7: "Sweet Dreams" (†). From Nov. 8: To be announced.
Theatre 3: Through Nov. 7: "After Hours" (†). From Nov. 8: To be announced.
Theatre 4: Through Nov. 7: "To Live and Die in L.A." (William Friedkin), with William L. Petersen and Willem Dafoe. From Nov. 8: "Target" (Arthur Penn), with Gene Hackman and Matt Dillon.
Theatre 5: Through Nov. 7: "Plenty" (†). From Nov. 8: "That Was Then . . . This Is Now" (Christopher Cain), with Emilio Estevez.
Theatre 6: Through Nov. 7: "Better Off Dead" (Savage Steve Holland), with John Cusack and David Ogden Stiers. From Nov. 8: "TRansylvania 6-5000" (Rudy De Luca), with Jeff Goldblum and Joseph Bologna.

Metro Cinema, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Through Nov. 7: "Out of Order" (Carl Schenkel; in German).
From Nov. 8: "Sweet Dreams" (†).

Olympia Quad, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 14: "A Nightmare on Elm Street, Part 2: Freddy's Revenge" (Jack Sholder). From Nov. 15: "Basket Case."
Theatre 2: "Krush Groove" (Michael Schultz).
Theatre 3: Through Nov. 14: "Death Wish 3" (Michael Winner), with Charles Bronson. From Nov. 15: "Once Bitten" (Howard Storm), with Lauren Hutton.
Theatre 4: Through Nov. 7: "Crossover Dreams" (Leon Ichaso), with Rubén Blades. From Nov. 8: "TRansylvania 6-5000" (Rudy De Luca), with Jeff Goldblum and Joseph Bologna.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Theatres, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 7: "Remo Williams: The Adventure Begins" (directed by Guy Hamilton), with Fred Ward and Joel Grey. From Nov. 8: "Target" (Arthur Penn), with Gene Hackman and Matt Dillon.
Theatre 2: "Commando" (Mark Lester), with Arnold Schwarzenegger.
Theatre 3: "Rambo: First Blood Part II" (†).
Theatre 4: Through Nov. 7: "Commando." From Nov. 8: "Remo Williams: The Adventure Begins."
Theatre 5: Through Nov. 7: "Better Off Dead" (Savage Steve Holland), with John Cusack and David Ogden Stiers. From Nov. 8: "Morons from Outer Space" (Mike Hodges).
Theatre 6: Through Nov. 7: "Evils of the Night." From Nov. 8: "After Hours" (†).

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)
"Jagged Edge" (†).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, B'way at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: "Re-Animator" (Stuart Gordon).
Theatre 3: Through Nov. 7: "Plenty" (†). From Nov. 8: "Silver Bullet" (Daniel Attias), with Gary Busey.
Theatre 4: "Sweet Dreams" (†).

Loews Astor Plaza, B'way at 44th. (869-8340)
Through Nov. 7: "To Live and Die in L.A." (William Friedkin), with William L. Petersen and Willem Dafoe.
From Nov. 8: To be announced.

Loews State 1 and 2, B'way at 45th. (575-5060)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 7: "Back to the Future" (†). From Nov. 8: "TRansylvania 6-5000" (Rudy De Luca), with Jeff Goldblum and Joseph Bologna.
Theatre 2: Through Nov. 7: "Silver Bullet" (Daniel Attias), with Gary Busey. From Nov. 8: "That Was Then . . . This Is Now" (Christopher Cain), with Emilio Estevez.

Movieland, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)
Through Nov. 7: "After Hours" (†).
From Nov. 8: "Back to the Future" (†).

New Embassy 49th Street, Seventh Ave. at 49th. (757-7003)
"Silverado" (†). No performances on Wednesday, Nov. 6, and Tuesday, Nov. 12.)

R.K.O. Century National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "A Nightmare on Elm Street, Part 2: Freddy's Revenge" (Jack Sholder).
Theatre 2: "A Nightmare on Elm Street, Part 2: Freddy's Revenge."

R.K.O. Century Warner Twin, B'way at 47th. (975-8369)
Theatre 1: "Krush Groove" (Michael Schultz).
Theatre 2: "Krush Groove."

U. A. Twin 1 and 2, B'way at 49th. (247-1635)
Theatre 1: "Death Wish 3" (Michael Winner), with Charles Bronson.
Theatre 2: "Death Wish 3."

REVIVAL HOUSES

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. at 57th. (757-2131)
Nov. 6: "Onimasa" (1985; directed by Hideo Gosha; in Japanese), with Tatsuya Nakadai.
Nov. 7-13: A week-long program of documentary films.
From Nov. 14: A week-long program of Italian films.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through Nov. 7: "La Strada" (1954; Federico Fellini; in Italian), with Anthony Quinn, Richard Basehart, and Giulietta Masina; and "Juliet of the Spirits" (1965; Federico Fellini; in Italian), with Giulietta Masina.
Nov. 8-9: "The Adventures of Buckaroo Banzai" (1984; W. D. Richter), with Peter Weller, John Lithgow, Ellen Barkin, and Jeff Goldblum; and "The Last Starfighter" (1984; Nick Castle), with Lance Guest and Dan O'Herlihy.
Nov. 10: "The Music Man" (†).
Nov. 11-12: "Tess" (†) and "The Story of Adèle H." (†).
Nov. 13-14: "Midnight Cowboy" (†) and "Mean Streets" (†).
Nov. 15-16: "The Man Who Fell to Earth"

(1976; Nicolas Roeg), with David Bowie, Rip Torn, Candy Clark, and Buck Henry; and "The Hunger" (1983; Tony Scott), with Catherine Deneuve, David Bowie, Susan Sarandon, and Cliff De Young.

REGENCY, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

Nov. 6: "Orphans of the Storm" (1921; D. W. Griffith; a silent film), with Lillian Gish and Dorothy Gish; and "The Guardsman" (1931; Sidney Franklin), with Lynn Fontanne and Alfred Lunt.

Nov. 7-9: "Rembrandt" (1936; Alexander Korda), with Charles Laughton, Elsa Lanchester, and Gertrude Lawrence; and "Witness for the Prosecution" (1958; Billy Wilder), with Tyrone Power, Marlene Dietrich, Charles Laughton, Elsa Lanchester, and Una O'Connor.

Nov. 10-11: "Annie Hall" (1977; Woody Allen), with Allen and Diane Keaton; and "Play It Again, Sam" (1972; Herbert Ross), with Woody Allen.

Nov. 12-13: "Monkey Business" (1931 †); and "Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein" (1948; Charles Barton).

Nov. 14-16: "The Mortal Storm" (†); and "The Shop Around the Corner" (1940; Ernst Lubitsch), with Margaret Sullavan and James Stewart.

THALIA, B'way at 95th. (222-3370)

Nov. 6: "The Incredibly Strange Creatures Who Stopped Living and Became Mixed-Up Zombies" (1962); and "The Hypnotic Eye" (1961; George Blair), with Jacques Bergerac.

Nov. 7: "Vengeance Is Mine" (1979; Shohei Imamura; in Japanese); and "The Drunken Angel" (1948; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese).

Nov. 8-9: "Strange Brew" (1983), directed by, and with, Dave Thomas and Rick Moranis; "Cannibal Girls" (1973); and "Going Berserk" (1983; David Steinberg), with John Candy.

Nov. 10: "The Man Who Would Be King" (1975; John Huston), with Sean Connery, Michael Caine, and Christopher Plummer; and "Robin and Marian" (†).

Nov. 11: "The Bride Wore Black" (†) and "Mississippi Mermaid" (†).

Nov. 12: "The Consequence" (1977; Wolfgang Petersen), with Jurgen Prochnow and Ernst Hannawald; and "Fortune and Men's Eyes" (1971; Harvey Hart), with Wendell Burton and Michael Greer.

Nov. 13: A program of seven James Mason films.

Nov. 14: A program of six British films from the forties.

Nov. 15-16: "The Three Ages" (†); "Parlor, Bedroom and Bath" (1931; Edward Sedgwick), with Buster Keaton; and "The Balloonatic" (1923; a silent film), directed by, and with, Buster Keaton.

THEATRE 80 ST. MARKS, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

Nov. 6: "Theodora Goes Wild" (1936; Richard Boleslavsky), with Irene Dunne, Melvyn Douglas, and Thomas Mitchell; and "She Married Her Boss" (1935; Gregory La Cava), with Claudette Colbert, Melvyn Douglas, and Edith Fellows.

Nov. 7: "The Emperor Jones" (1933; Dudley Murphy), with Paul Robeson and Dudley Digges; and "Sanders of the River" (1935; Zoltán Korda), with Paul Robeson, Nina Mae McKinney, and Leslie Banks.

Nov. 8-9: "On the Waterfront" (1954; Elia Kazan), with Marlon Brando, Lee J. Cobb, Eva Marie Saint, Karl Malden, and Rod Steiger; and "The Wild One" (1954; Laslo Benedek), with Marlon Brando, Mary Murphy, and Lee Marvin.

Nov. 10: "The Star" (†) and "I Could Go On Singing" (†).

Nov. 11: "The Red House" (1947; Delmer Daves), with Edward G. Robinson, Lon McCallister, and Judith Anderson; and "D.O.A." (1949; Rudolph Maté), with Edmond O'Brien.

Nov. 12: "The Earrings of Madame de . . ." (1953; Max Ophuls; in French), with Charles Boyer, Danielle Darrieux, and Vittorio De Sica; and "Le Plaisir" (1952; Max Ophuls; in French), with Claude Dauphin, Daniel Gélin, Simone Simon, Madeleine Renaud, and Jean Gabin.

Nov. 13: "It Should Happen to You" (†); and "The Whole Town's Talking" (1935; John Ford), with Jean Arthur and Edward G. Robinson.

Nov. 14: "Kings Row" (†); and "Knute Rockne—All American" (1940; Lloyd Bacon), with Pat O'Brien and Ronald Reagan.

Nov. 15-16: "Ministry of Fear" (1945; Fritz Lang), with Ray Milland, Marjorie Reynolds, and Dan Duryea; and "The Fallen Idol" (1948; Carol Reed), with Bobby Henrey, Ralph Richardson, and Michèle Morgan.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490; a limited number of tickets are available to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)

THEATRE 1: Nov. 7 at 2:30: "The Churning of the Sea" (1934; V. Shantaram; in Hindi, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 7 at 6: "My Name Is Joker" (1970; Raj Kapoor; in Hindi, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 8 at 2:30: "The Churning of the Sea." . . . ¶ Nov. 8 at 6: "The Undefeated" (1937; V. Shantaram; in Hindi, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 10 at 1: "The Thirsty One" (1957; Guru Dutt; in Hindi, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 10 at 5 and Nov. 11 at 2:30: "Paper Flowers" (1959; Guru Dutt; in Hindi, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 11 at 6: "The Thirsty One." . . . ¶ Nov. 12 at 2: "Mr. and Mrs. 55" (1955; Guru Dutt; in Hindi, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 12 at 6:30: A program of French advertising films, 1908-85. . . . ¶ Nov. 14 at 2:30: "Variety" (1924; E. A. Dupont; a German silent film, with English intertitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 14 at 5: "Master, Mistress, Servant" (1962; Abrar Alvi; in Hindi, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 15 at 2:30: "Aar Paar" (1954; Guru Dutt; in Hindi, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 16 at 1: "Master, Mistress, Servant." . . . ¶ Nov. 16 at 5: "Mr. and Mrs. 55."

THEATRE 2: Nov. 7 at 1: A program of international animated films. . . . ¶ Nov. 7 at 3 and 6:30: A program of Soviet animated films. . . . ¶ Nov. 8 at 3 and 6:30: Two different programs of international animated films. . . . ¶ Nov. 9 at 12:30: A program of Warner Brothers cartoons. . . . ¶ Nov. 9 at 2: "The Undefeated" (1937; V. Shantaram; in Hindi, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 9 at 5: "Eternal Light" (1936; V. Shantaram; in Hindi, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 10 at 12:30: A program of Warner Brothers cartoons. . . . ¶ Nov. 10 at 2:30 and 5:30: Two different programs of international animated films. . . . ¶ Nov. 12 at 2, 3:15, and 4:15: A program of French advertising films, 1908-85. . . . ¶ Nov. 12 at 6: "The Mechanical Man" (1958; Ritwik Ghatak; in Bengali, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Nov. 14 at 12:30: A program of French advertising films, 1908-85. . . . ¶ Nov. 14 at 3: A program of five short Hungarian films. . . . ¶ Nov. 14 at 6:30: A program of three Hungarian films. . . . ¶ Nov. 15 at 3: Another program of three Hungarian films. . . . ¶ Nov. 15 at 6:30: "Flirt" (1980; Ildiko Eyedi) and "Dream Reconstructions" (1977; Miklos Erdely), both films in Hungarian, with English subtitles. . . . ¶ Nov. 16 at 12:30: A program of Warner Brothers cartoons about going to war. . . . ¶ Nov. 16 at 2:30: A program of five short Hungarian films. . . . ¶ Nov. 16 at 5:30: Another program of five short Hungarian films.

WHITNEY MUSEUM, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—Starting Nov. 13, three film sculptures by Deborah Whitman—"A Cloud Is on Top of the Box of Doors" (1982), "A Staircase with a Tree at the End" (1983), and "The Upper Room" (1984). Continuous showings Tuesdays, 1 to 8, Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5, and Sundays, noon to 6. Closed Mondays.

BEACON THEATRE, B'way at 74th St. (787-1477)—"Wings" (1927; William Wellman), a silent film, with Buddy Rogers, Clara Bow, Richard Arlen, and Gary Cooper. (Nov. 11 at 2 and 8.)

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN THESE PAGES DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

AFTER HOURS—Martin Scorsese directed, and his work here is livelier and more companionable than it has been in recent years. But this skittish paranoid fantasy is just a classroom exercise of a movie: elegant, crisp, and flashy. Griffin Dunne plays a young word-processor operator in midtown New York, who goes down to SoHo for a date and finds himself trapped in a nightmare world, where he has to contend with one flaky, threatening woman after another: Rosanna Arquette, Linda Fiorentino, Teri Garr, Catherine O'Hara, and Verna Bloom. With John Heard, Cheech and Chong, Dick Miller, and Bronson Pinchot. Script by Joseph Minion. (Reviewed in our issue of 9/23/85.) (New Gramercy. . . . ¶ Sutton, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Movieland; through Nov. 7. . . . ¶ Manhattan, and Criterion Theatres; starting Nov. 8.)

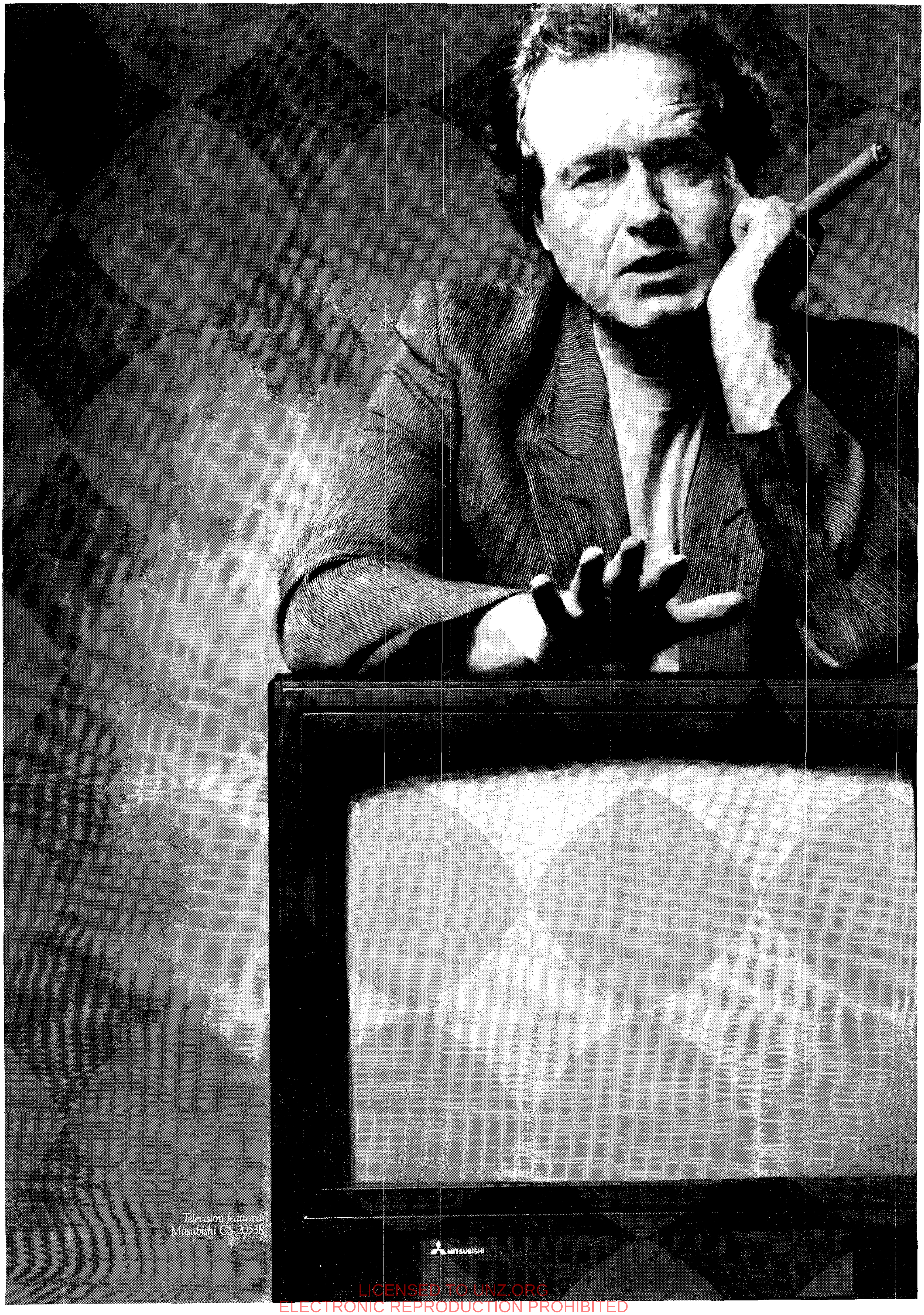
BACK TO THE FUTURE—Directed by Robert Zemeckis, this piece of Pop Art Americana is a clever, generally engaging screwball comedy. Christopher Lloyd is the small-town crackpot inventor who builds a time machine, and Michael J. Fox is Marty, the seventeen-year-old high-school boy who is hurtled back thirty years to 1955, where his parents are seventeen-year-olds at the same school. The movie has the structure of a comedy classic, but it doesn't have the rambunctiousness or the maniacal edge; the thinking is cramped and conventional. With Lea Thompson and Crispin Glover. (7/29/85) (Eastside Cinema, and Loews State; through Nov. 7. . . . ¶ Movieland; starting Nov. 8.)

THE BRIDE WORE BLACK (1968)—Truffaut's film in homage to Hitchcock, with Jeanne Moreau as the racked and elegant widow of a bridegroom shot on the steps of the church. The hero worship of Hitchcock seems a bit wasteful, for Truffaut is the infinitely greater filmmaker, imbuing even this mechanical story with something finely detailed and lyric about love. In French. (Thalia; Nov. 11.)

COMPROMISING POSITIONS—Directed by Frank Perry, from the novel by Susan Isaacs, the movie provides a batch of actresses with a chance to show some comic verve. Susan Sarandon is the heroine, whose unquenchable curiosity saves her from the doldrums of affluence in the suburbs with a lawyer husband; when her smiley-eyed, lecherous dentist (Joe Mantegna) is murdered in his snazzy office, she can't resist poking into the case, because it reveals so much about what has been going on around her which she has been unaware of. Judith Ivey is in top form as a frisky cynic who seems to have been wised up from birth. And Deborah Rush is startlingly poignant as a tarty, uneducated blonde, with scars on her tummy and frightened eyes. With Edward Herrmann, Raul Julia, and Anne De Salvo. (9/9/85) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, and Loews Paramount; through Nov. 7.)

DANCE WITH A STRANGER—Set in London in 1954 and 1955, and featuring Miranda Richardson as Ruth Ellis, the demi-prostitute who put a few slugs in her weakling young lover (played by Rupert Everett), and was the last woman in England to be sent to the gallows, this English film might be described as kitchen-sink *film noir*. The director, Mike Newell, doesn't give you a minute's relief. The picture is all style—style used to show us the shabbiness of the characters' lives and how they're all trapped, doing what's inevitable. With Ian Holm. (8/26/85) (Paris; through Nov. 7. . . . ¶ Eastside Cinema, Quad Cinema, and Lincoln Plaza; starting Nov. 8.)

8½ (1963)—Fellini's celebrated autobiographical phantasmagoria. Guido (Marcello Mastroianni), the director hero, is the center of the film's universe, the creator on whose word everything waits, the man sought after by everyone. He can do anything, and the possibilities confuse him. We see Guido's conflicts between his love for his wife, his desire for his mistress, his ideal of innocence, and his dreams of a harem, and we are given to understand that he must come to grips with himself as a precondition to "creation." It's a de-luxe glorification of creative crisis,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Ridley Scott On Set Design.

A frame plucked at random from any one of Ridley Scott's four feature films—*The Duellists, Alien, Blade Runner,* and this year's *Legend*—is graphic evidence that this man treats the screen as a canvas. Behind the beauty of the imagery is a master storyteller with an uncommon ability to make visuals and sound resonate with meaning.

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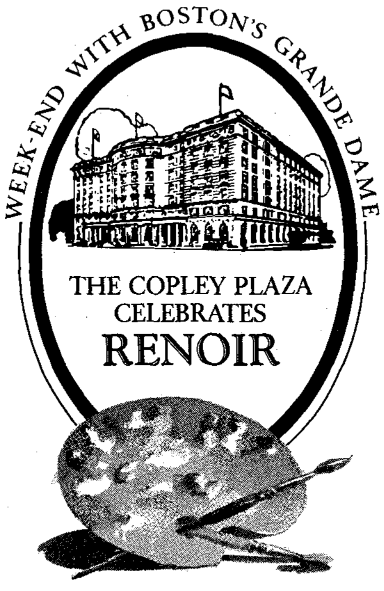
A $10,000 donation in the name of Ridley Scott has been made to the U.S.A. for Africa Relief Fund.



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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

visually arresting (the dark and light contrasts are extraordinary, magical), but in some essential way conventional-minded. The cast includes Anouk Aimée, Sandra Milo, and Claudia Cardinale. In Italian. (Bleecker St. Cinema.)

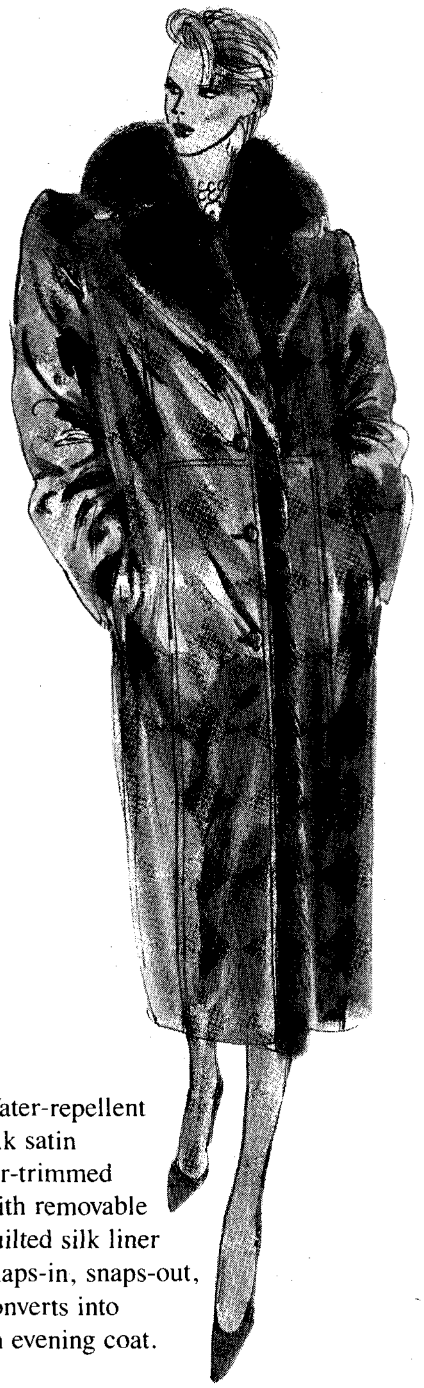
FANTASIA (1940)—Disney enlisted an odd assortment of collaborators (among them Stokowski, who did it voluntarily, and Stravinsky, who was brought in involuntarily), and this grab bag of ambitious animated shorts—an attempt to combine high art and mass culture—was publicized as if it were an artistic landmark. Disney's animators provided visual interpretations of Bach's "Toccata and Fugue in D Minor" and of hyped-up excerpts: volcanoes erupt and dinosaurs battle during "The Rite of Spring;" garlanded girl centaurs cavort during Beethoven's "Pastoral." "The Sorcerer's Apprentice," featuring Mickey Mouse, and parts of other sequences are first-rate Disney, but the total effect is grotesquely kitschy. (Ziegfeld.)

I COULD GO ON SINGING (1963)—Dreadful, but often fascinating; Judy Garland in the sort of movie that is usually made about a performer long after the events, and with someone else playing the lead. Her face puffy, her manner distressed, she goes through a sort of "Madame X" version of a selfish singer's life, in which she belts out numbers at the Palladium. Made in England and directed by Ronald Neame. With Dirk Bogarde, Jack Klugman, and Aline MacMahon. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Nov. 10.)

IT SHOULD HAPPEN TO YOU (1954)—Judy Holliday in a pleasantly erratic satirical comedy. The heroine, who yearns for celebrity, takes her life savings and places her name in giant letters across a billboard in Columbus Circle. Before long, she is as inescapably in the public eye as one of the Gabors. She also tosses about in romantic indecision: Should she give her heart to an honest documentary filmmaker (Jack Lemmon) and say farewell to the big time, or should she surrender herself to the sudsy embraces of a soap manufacturer (Peter Lawford)? Directed by George Cukor. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Nov. 13.)

JAGGED EDGE—This thriller doesn't offer the pleasures of style, but it does the job. It catches you in a vise—it's scary, and when it's over you feel a little shaken. Jeff Bridges plays the San Francisco newspaper publisher-editor who is tried for the murder of his rich wife, who owned the paper; Peter Coyote is the D.A. prosecuting him; and Glenn Close is the radiantly blond woman lawyer who defends him, and falls in love with him. She's the star of the movie; we feel an immediate, empathic connection with her excitement. Good thrillers have an electric current running through them; here it runs through her performance, and then charges the film's last section. Working from a script by Joe Eszterhas that's smart, pared down, and efficient, the director, Richard Marquand, sets up the situations and delivers the payoffs; he doesn't show much in the way of imagination or devotion to craft, but he gets distinctively pungent performances. Bridges is marvellously hooded; you can't read his emotions. (This is some of the best work he has done.) And Coyote's D.A. has a suggestion of something rancid and vindictive. As the profane, hard-drinking private investigator who tracks down witnesses for the defense, Robert Loggia provides a few puckish curlicues and walks off with his scenes. Also with Leigh Taylor-Young, Marshall Colt, and, as a final surprise witness, Karen Austin, in an intense scene that has a porno queasiness about it. (11/4/85) (34th St. East, Coronet, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Embassy 1.)

KINGS ROW (1942)—The typical nostalgic view of American small-town life turned inside out: instead of sweetness and health we get fear, sanctimoniousness, sadism, and insanity. The time is the beginning of the twentieth century, and the hero (Robert Cummings) is interested in the new ideas of Sigmund Freud. (Which is unfortunate: when Cummings, eyes alight with idealism, mouths naïve views on Freud, almost any contemporary audience is bound to break up.) The director, Sam Wood, gets some remarkably well-defined performances from others, though: Ann Sheridan is radiant in the role of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a girl from the wrong side of the tracks. Charles Coburn and Claude Rains are the town's doctors; Coburn likes to perform amputations without anesthetics (his special victim is Ronald Reagan), and Rains keeps his daughter locked up in his house. The cast also includes Betty Field, Judith Anderson, and Maria Ouspenskaya. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Nov. 14.)

Kiss of the Spider Woman—Set in a nameless South American country, Hector Babenco's film is about a homosexual window dresser, Molina (William Hurt), and a revolutionary, Valentín (Raul Julia), who share a prison cell. Molina tries to comfort Valentín and help him forget his pain and misery by telling him the stories of old movies. Hurt is just about the only thing to look at; he's very likable in the scenes where Molina reveals his tenderness and warmth and humor. But it's a slack piece of moviemaking, and as sentimental as the forties screen romances that Molina is infatuated with. This Brazilian production, made in English, from Manuel Puig's novel, was shot in São Paulo. (8/26/85) (D. W. Griffith, R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin, and Lincoln Plaza.)

Marie—Sissy Spacek stars in what is advertised as the true story of Marie Ragghianti, who, in 1976, became the first woman to head Tennessee's Board of Pardons and Paroles, and discovered that she was expected to rubber-stamp the deals of the state officials who were selling pardons. Directed by Roger Donaldson, the movie tells Marie's story clearly and briskly in political-thriller style, ending in courtroom drama. The Marie it presents is unbelievably naïve and good. And fine, magnetic actress though she is, Spacek doesn't appear to have any way of communicating experience, maturity, womanhood. With Jeff Daniels, Fred Thompson, and Keith Szarabajka. Based on "Marie: A True Story," by Peter Maas. (10/21/85) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, and Loews New York Twin; through Nov. 7.)

Mean Streets (1973)—A true original, and a triumph of personal filmmaking. This picture about the experience of growing up in New York's Little Italy has an unsettling, episodic rhythm, and it's dizzyingly sensual. The director, Martin Scorsese, shows us a thicker-textured rot than we have ever had in an American movie, and a riper sense of evil. With Harvey Keitel, Robert De Niro, Richard Romanus, David Proval, Harry Northup, George Memmoli, Amy Robinson, Cesare Danova, and, in bits, David Carradine, Robert Carradine, and the director. (Cinema Village; Nov. 13-14.)

Midnight Cowboy (1969)—Jon Voight as Joe Buck, a dishwasher from a small town in Texas who hopes to make a living in New York by servicing rich women, and Dustin Hoffman as Ratso Rizzo, the crippled petty thief and con man he meets. The point of the movie must be to offer us some insight into the two derelicts—two of the many kinds of dreamers and failures in the city. But the director, John Schlesinger, keeps pounding away at America, determined to expose how horrible its inhabitants are—he dehumanizes the people Joe Buck and Ratso are part of. The spray of venom is just about overpowering, yet the two actors save the picture. Hoffman's raspy voice and jumpy walk and Jon Voight's pallor and blue eyes and hurt, bewildered stare give a core of feeling. With Brenda Vaccaro, Sylvia Miles, and John McGiver. From James Leo Herlihy's novel. (Cinema Village; Nov. 13-14.)

Mississippi Mermaid (1970)—A small, appealing film by Truffaut, bungled as a thriller but gently expressive as a love story. Jean-Paul Belmondo plays a rich colonialist on a tropical island who orders a bride (Catherine Deneuve) from France through the classified ads. In French. (Thalia; Nov. 11.)

Monkey Business (1931)—The four Marx Brothers as anarchic stowaways on an ocean liner who get involved with bootleggers and Thelma Todd. The first of their films written directly for the screen (by S. J. Perelman, Will B. Johnstone, and Arthur Sheekman). Norman McLeod directed this heavenly, corny nonsense. (Regency; Nov. 12-13.)

The Mortal Storm (1940)—Of a German family in 1933, and how events changed the lives of all its members. Powerful and not overdone. With Margaret Sullavan, James Stewart, Robert Young, and Frank Morgan. Directed by Frank Borzage. (Regency; Nov. 14-16.)

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The Music Man (1962)—A cheerful, broad piece of Americana about a silver-tongued con man, who drifts into an Iowa town and persuades the gullible residents that the children need to organize a fine big marching band. The director, Morton DaCosta, isn't comfortable with the camera, and the material seems too literal, too practical, too set. But the star, Robert Preston, has a few minutes of fast patter—conmanship set to music—that constitute one of the high points in the history of American musicals. This is one of those triumphs that only a veteran performer can have; Preston's years of experience and his love of performing come together joyously. With Shirley Jones as the librarian who reforms the roué hero, and Paul Ford, Hermione Gingold, Buddy Hackett, Pert Kelton, and Ronny Howard. (Cinema Village; Nov. 10.)

Plenty—David Hare's sick-soul-of-England play, which he adapted for the screen and Fred Schepisi directed, turns his own preachiness into the intellectual clarity of an abrasive woman. After serving courageously as a British courier for the French Resistance, Susan Traherne (Meryl Streep) has her youthful idealism destroyed by the hypocrisy and materialism of postwar life. Her outspokenness turns her into a scourge, and eventually into a basket case. Hare's means in this movie are every bit as constricted as what he's attacking. And as Streep plays Susan there's no imploded energy in her rudeness and no force in the film. She just isn't there. With John Gielgud, Tracey Ullman, Charles Dance, Ian McKellen, Sam Neill, and Sting. (10/7/85) (Cinema 3. . . . ¶ Murray Hill, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy; through Nov. 7. . . . ¶ R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin; starting Nov. 8.)

Rambo: First Blood Part II—Audiences hoot at it and get a little charged up at the same time. The proceedings are directed by George P. Cosmatos, and he gives the near-psychotic material a veneer of professionalism, but the looniness is always there. The film's star and progenitor is Sylvester Stallone, and the way he's photographed he's huge—our national palooka. This humanoid Christ figure with brown leather skin and symmetrical scars goes into Vietnam and brings out a bunch of our missing-in-action men. With Julia Nickson, Richard Crenna, and Charles Napier. (6/17/85) (Criterion Theatres.)

Robin and Marian (1976)—Sean Connery and Audrey Hepburn are wittily matched, but the picture's revisionist approach to legends results in a series of trivializing attitudes and whimsical poses. As the Sheriff of Nottingham, Robert Shaw makes speeches about Robin Hood's death fixation, and Marian poisons herself and Robin because he's a fool who lives to fight. The line between tragic horror and joking make-believe has got smudged; the film is so sententious that it's difficult to gauge when to laugh and when to be appalled. Richard Lester directed, from James Goldman's script. With Nicol Williamson and Richard Harris. (Thalia; Nov. 10.)

Silverado—The director, Lawrence Kasdan, uses accomplished actors: the four heroes journeying west to Silverado in the eighteen-eighties are played by Kevin Kline, Scott Glenn, Kevin Costner, and Danny Glover, and they're variously involved with Linda Hunt, Rosanna Arquette, Brian Dennehy, John Cleese, and Jeff Goldblum. But the atmosphere is arch and uninvolving, and these actors don't seem sure what their characters are meant to be. The film is like a homage to the expensive Western; it's so opulent it has a nouveau-riche aura about it. (7/29/85) (New Embassy 49th Street. No performances on Wednesday, Nov. 6, and Tuesday, Nov. 12.)

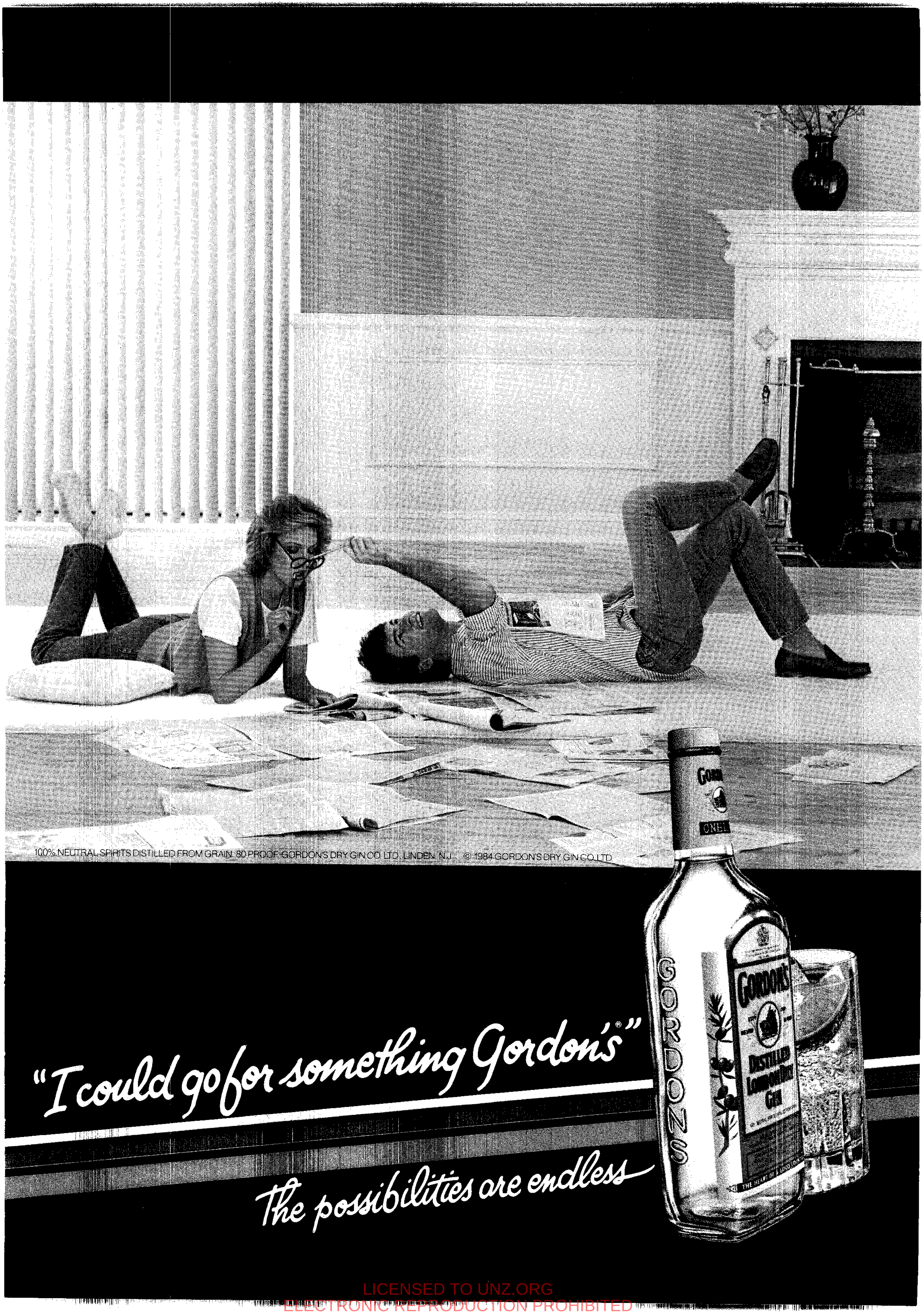
The Star (1953)—Very bad. Bette Davis as a star who once won an Academy Award but is now down on her luck; she lands in jail for drunken driving, and is saved by Sterling Hayden, a boatbuilder who once acted with her. Others who wander about in this lachrymose, exploitative treatment of the lives of aging stars (it was originally written for Joan Crawford) are Natalie Wood, Minor Watson, and Warner Anderson. Stuart Heisler directed, feebly. Davis throws her weight around but comes through in only a few scenes. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Nov. 10.)

The Story of Adèle H. (1975)—A François Truffaut film to rank with "Shoot the Piano Player," "Jules and Jim," and "The Wild Child"—and perhaps his most passionate work. The film is damnably intelligent—almost frighteningly so, like some passages in Russian novels which strip the characters bare. And it's deeply, disharmoniously funny—which Truffaut had never been before. The story, about romantic love fulfilled by self-destruction, is based on the journals of Adèle, a daughter of Victor Hugo; she's played by the prodigious young actress Isabelle Adjani. In French. (Cinema Village; Nov. 11-12.)

Sweet Dreams—As the pop-and-country singer Patsy Cline, Jessica Lange has a raw physicality that's challenging and heroic. The singing voice that comes out of her is from the vocal tracks of recordings that Patsy Cline made between 1960 and 1963, and Lange's body lives up to the sound. The director, Karel Reisz, doesn't step back from Patsy; she's taken on her own terms. As Patsy's husband, Ed Harris brings the role a tragic, pitiable sweetness. With Ann Wedgeworth as Patsy's mother. People cry at this movie though it isn't sentimental—it's an honest tearjerker. (10/21/85) (Gemini, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Embassy. . . . ¶ Loews 84th Street Sixplex; through Nov. 7.)

Tess (1980)—Roman Polanski's version of Thomas Hardy's "Tess of the D'Urbervilles" is beautifully structured, and the craftsmanship is hypnotic. But the picture is tame. For a reader, the shock of the 1891 book is that Tess isn't simply a woman at the mercy of men, society, and nature; she's also at the mercy of her own passions. Polanski's Tess (the lovely young Nastassia Kinski, seventeen when she played the role) is strictly a victim of men and social conventions. The film takes a sympathetic, feminist position toward her—in a narrow and demeaning sense. She isn't a protagonist; she is merely a hapless, frail creature, buffeted by circumstances. With fine performances by Leigh Lawson, Peter Firth, John Collin, Tony Church, and just about everyone else in the supporting cast. (Cinema Village; Nov. 11-12.)

The Three Ages (1923)—Buster Keaton in love in the Stone Age, the Roman Age, and the Modern Age. With Margaret Leahy, Wallace Beery, Joe Roberts, and Horace Morgan. Directed by Keaton. (Thalia; Nov. 15-16.)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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

WE all, at times, think in metaphors. We speak, for example, of the maneuvers leading up to the talks between President Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev as a chess match; and we try to determine who is ahead in the arms race—an odd metaphor, because what would constitute victory in such a race? Each issue of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* includes a clock on its cover pegging the situation of our planet as three minutes, six minutes, two minutes, or one minute to midnight. We cannot help using metaphors, and often they help us to clarify a situation. But we need to be responsible for our metaphors. We must tend them, consider their implications, refine them, hold them to account. In doing so, we hold ourselves to account.

During his appearance before the General Assembly of the United Nations in observance of the fortieth anniversary of that world body's founding charter, President Reagan concluded his speech with a profoundly moving and yet strangely untethered metaphor. In discussing "the internationalist spirit," he recalled its epiphany a month earlier in the aftermath of the Mexican earthquake, when nations throughout the world quickly banded together to rush in relief supplies, teams of experts, and financial contributions. He then summoned that heart-wrenching scene when, several days after the quake, workers burrowing through "a huge mound of rubble that was once the Juárez Hospital . . . heard a faint sound coming from somewhere in the heart of the crushed concrete," and, redoubling their efforts, "hoping beyond hope," managed somehow to excavate three still living newborn infants. "Well," Mr. Reagan concluded, drawing the moral from this account, "amidst all that hopelessness and debris came a timely and timeless lesson for us all. We witnessed the miracle of life." We've characterized this concluding flourish in the President's speech as strangely untethered because it didn't seem to grow out of anything in the speech. While many diplomats in the audience had been expecting that the President, in response to the proposals recently advanced by Mr. Gorbachev for drastic reductions in strategic nuclear stockpiles, would at the very least offer some counterproposals of his own, he spent much of his speech sidestepping that issue, and opening an entirely new salient, by presenting a list of five countries in the world where what he has elsewhere referred to as "freedom fighters" were currently confronting "Marxist-Leninist" regimes that are, "almost from the day they take power, at war with their own people." He spoke of Afghanistan, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Angola, and Nicaragua as being all of a piece, all subject to "an ideology imposed from without," and proposed that each of these regions now become the subject of bilateral negotiations between the superpowers. The proposal itself had its imperfections (the list of countries was patently one-sided, for one thing), but what was most disconcerting was its being put forward in that speech, at that moment, before that audience: an audience of diplomats gathered from around the world and waiting for some glimmer of hope regarding the position of the United States in the principal crisis facing the world today—the possibility of a sudden acceleration in nuclear-arms procurements, and the greatly magnified threat of nuclear annihilation which such an acceleration would pose. A clever, fairly transparent flanking maneuver was not what the world's diplomats or the world's people were expecting. In this context, the rhetorical flourish concluding the speech—that set piece about the infants being rescued from the shambles—seemed untethered, as we have noted, or, if not that, morbidly predictive. Was Mr. Reagan suggesting that the coming Geneva summit and the arms negotiations thereafter might well end up a shambles but that this didn't matter, because somehow (*how?*) the miracle of life might be plucked from the wreckage? (There were some more hopeful signs when President Reagan, in part responding to the disappointment of our European allies in his United Nations speech, finally did present a counterproposal to Mr. Gorbachev; it remains to be seen whether either side is being truly serious in these negotiations.)

The President's choice of metaphors at the United Nations seemed particularly eerie to us, because during the past few months we, too, have been haunted by the resonant implications of that Mexican earthquake—the way it seemed to suggest a metaphor for the situation of the world as a whole today. Only, it's a somewhat different aspect of that disaster which keeps recurring to us. We keep being drawn back to all those geological explanations: the three-dimensional maps, the computer simulations, the talk of fault lines and subduction trenches, of huge, shifting plates of the earth's crust wedged up one against another, the pressures building, the plates buckling under the strain—years and years of relative silence and then, suddenly, the cataclysmic upheaval as the locked masses slip, lurch, and crash. That is the nightmare intuition that keeps intruding upon our daily reality. During the past forty years, two great historical forces—the American and Russian destinies—have become locked and jammed as, year by year, the pressures of ever growing nuclear stockpiles have built up on either side of the fault line. Apologists for the status quo point to almost forty years of relative peace between the superpowers and assure the world that it needn't worry: deterrence works. But in plate tectonics—and the point here is that plate tectonics provides an uncanny metaphor for the movements of human history—momentary peace may simply prefigure a cataclysm of unprecedented magnitude. There is, however, a fundamental difference between geology and history: human beings are responsible for history and can to a certain extent shape it. In the current situation, it is people—citizens, human beings—who can choose either to let arms control fail, and thereby sanction an ever greater buildup of pressures along the fault line, or to begin immediately, at what may be the last possible moment, to dismantle the nuclear stockpiles and ban further technological development and testing, and thereby move to lessen the pressures on both sides of the fault line. The world needn't let itself be lulled into accepting a fatalistic metaphor that presents as triumph the salvaging of three babies from an unspeakable catastrophe and suggests that this is all it should hope for.

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A FRIEND writes:

The other Saturday night, I set all the clocks in the house back from daylight-saving to standard time. The clock on the VCR was easy—I just pushed the button designated "hour" on the control panel and the glowing digital readout replaced "23:27" with "22:27." The electric clock in the kitchen was also easy—a matter of nudging the hour hand back with a finger. But my bedside battery-powered alarm clock presented a big problem. Since the last time change, the knurled knob on the back that sets the hands had disappeared, leaving nothing but a tiny stem, almost hidden in the innards of the clock. I had to use tweezers, and since the tweezers happened to have very fine points it was almost impossible to get a purchase on the stem. I could turn it only a little before the tweezers would slip. The hands refused to go backward, so I had to take them through eleven hours—almost a complete trip around the face of the clock. And I had to do it by holding the stem steady with the tweezers while I turned the clock. Toward the end of the chore, I realized that I could have simply removed the battery for an hour and then started the clock again.

As I sat on the edge of my bed and pinched the tweezers down on the stem and painstakingly rotated the clock, little by little, readjusting the tweezers constantly, I thought of Goethe's Faust and his promise to Mephistopheles: "If I ever say to the moment—'Stay, you are so beautiful!' then you may throw me into chains; then will I readily perish; then may the death-bell toll; then you are free from your service. The clock may stand, the hour-hand may fall: time will be a thing no more for me!" Perhaps you do surrender to the Devil when you wish time would stop; perhaps you're asking for the stasis of death. But occasionally, without being asked, time neither stops nor passes—it drops out of mind with such simplicity and secrecy that not until later do you understand the enormous gift you have received. As I struggled with the clock, I began to remember some of those occasions in my life:

I am at the house of a poet friend who is extraordinarily well read. About ten in the evening, the first gusts of a severe storm begin to arrive, and I decide to get home while I still can. "On the shoulders of Balzac stands Proust, and on the shoulders of Proust stands Roger Martin du Gard," my friend remarks as I am rising from my chair. Until now, he has always considered "À la Recherche du Temps Perdu" to be superior to all other novels, but now he begins to tell me about the great, unfinished novel of Martin du Gard, "Le Lieutenant-Colonel de Maumort," which is completely unknown to me, which was not published until recently, in the Pléiade edition, and which he has already read five times in French. And then it's three-thirty in the morning, I haven't yawned once, a hard rain is rattling the windows, and I wonder how I am ever going to find a taxi.

As I walk by my rather dishevelled garden in the country, I kneel to pull up a weed. I am called to lunch, and reply that I'll be there in a minute. The shadows begin to pour around my feet, and the earth grows cool under my hands. A voice rings out from the house: "It's suppertime!"

I'm having lunch with a friend in a Japanese restaurant. We exchange news about our activities and our families and friends. After an hour, the conversation seems finished. Neither of us can think of another bit of social small talk or another topical observation. Suddenly, my friend says, with deep sincerity, "What I want more than anything else is to be closer to the truth." We both lean forward on our elbows, alertly exchanging thoughts. We have become living beings, and as the waiters and cooks gather over platters of noodles at the other end of the restaurant, now empty except for us, I feel that my companion and I just happen to be visiting this planet temporarily and using these bodies of ours to speak, and that some part of each of us is outside time altogether.

Although it took me twenty-nine minutes to set the clock, and by the end my fingers were cramped, I scarcely noticed that any time at all had passed.

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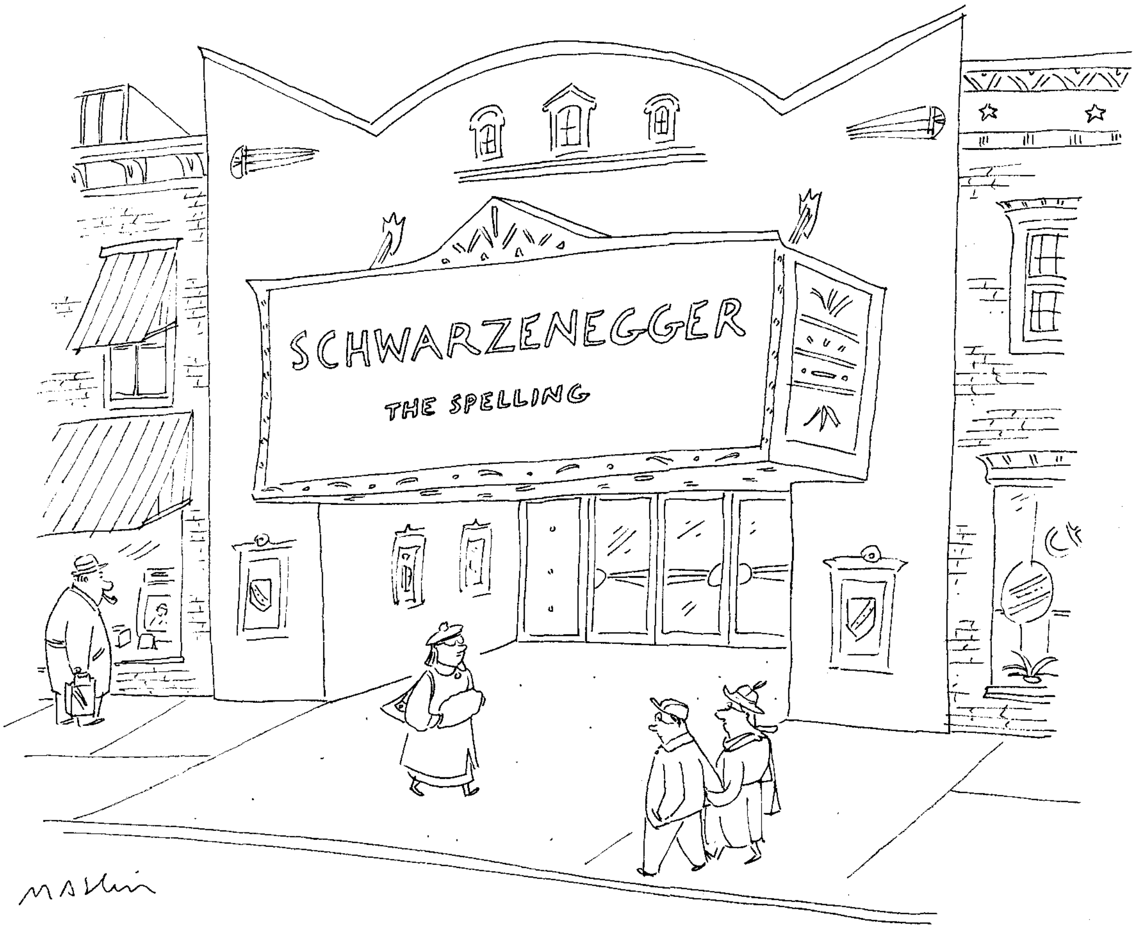
Security

THE United Nations may have received mixed reviews on its anniversary, but there was general agreement that the security arrangements for the event were an unqualified success. Fifty-two motorcades on Wednesday (the day President Reagan arrived in town) and fifty-five on Thursday (the official birthday celebration) shuttled Presidents and Prime Ministers between hotels, missions, and the U.N. headquarters without incident, though they produced intermittent traffic jams and provided the New York City Police Department with its biggest work load since the visit of Pope John Paul II in 1979. There were a few minor glitches—Prime Minister Gandhi's thirty-car motorcade boxed in President Mobutu's twelve-car motorcade for forty-five minutes at the Waldorf; Chancellor Kohl was nearly hit by a police car in the U.N. driveway; and Secretary Shultz's motorcade had to be halted abruptly when it was found to be travelling south on First Avenue as President Reagan's motorcade was travelling north on that street—but major disasters were averted, thanks to a combination of luck, advance planning, and tight control.

We spent some time at a temporary command post that had been set up in three vans at First Avenue and Forty-fifth Street, and can report that the police were using both sophisticated surveillance techniques (video cameras, mobile computers) and old-fashioned foot patrols to secure an area of about thirty square blocks, stretching from the Waldorf (where many of the visitors were staying) to the United Nations compound. Arriving at the command post on Tuesday evening, we found Assistant Police Chief Gerard Kerins, a man with a crisp, decisive manner, conferring with several senior officers in a small office that occupied the north end of a rented trailer. On one wall were three color television monitors, showing him the Waldorf "well" (a street-level passage off Forty-ninth Street where motorcades loaded and unloaded), the U.N. gate at First Avenue and Forty-second Street, and Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza, at First Avenue and Forty-seventh Street, the site of several planned demonstrations. (Chief Kerins could select the pictures he wanted from six cameras that were feeding images into a video van parked nearby.) Beside him were two telephones—one of them a direct line to Chief of Department Robert Johnston at Police Headquarters—and an intercom that, through a message center in the video van, provided a minute-by-minute account of the position of each motorcade. We looked at a computer printout on Wednesday's planned motorcades and noticed that the police had divided them into four security-risk groups. Priority 1 (Reagan, Mrs. Reagan, Bush, Gandhi, Peres, and Ortega) would have the longest motorcades (from twenty-five to thirty-five cars) and the tightest security. Priority 2 (Mrs. Thatcher, Craxi, Zhao, Shevardnadze, Mrs. Marcos, and Zia) would have ten to twelve cars, Priority 3 (France, Mauritius, and South Korea) would have three or four cars, and Priority 4 (everybody else) would have one or two official vehicles. Chief Kerins told us that the deployment of his force was planned seventy-two hours in advance, and was based on information that had been stored in a big I.B.M. computer at the other end of the trailer. "We know who is arriving, who is speaking, what demonstrations to expect, and what parties are taking place, and, of course, we have a considerable input of intelligence from the Secret Service and the State Department, so we can shift our men around according to need," he said. "Tomorrow is a big day. The President will be in town, and in the evening there's a party at the U.N. Fifty-two motorcades are scheduled, and they will probably make about seventy-five moves, so we have gone from Blue Alert to Yellow Alert, which mobilizes fifteen hundred men. We will have officers stationed along the avenues and cross streets from First to Third and from Forty-second to Fifty-ninth. There will be a mounted unit at Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza to control demonstrations, a helicopter unit overhead, a Harbor Patrol boat in the East River, and a number of counter-assault teams, armed with rifles, stationed on rooftops. Trash cans and post-office boxes have been removed from the area, at the request of the Secret Service, and any cars parked along the motorcade routes will be towed away in a matter of minutes. Actually, I think we've lucked out this time, because there's no Arafat, no Castro, and no Qaddafi. Our major security risk is Gandhi, because we understand that there are still some difficulties with the Sikhs. We don't control the actual motorcades. The Secret Service and the Department of State take care of that. Our job is to secure street access routes and to provide protection as the delegates move from one place to another. One major problem is parking, because the motorcades will have to get in and out without blocking one another. For evening receptions at the Waldorf, we're going to close off a few blocks of lower Park Avenue and park about four hundred cars there and on the ramp above Grand Central Terminal. At the U.N., we've sealed off First Avenue from Forty-second to Forty-eighth Streets, so that we can use the curb lanes to park motorcades that can't be accommodated at the U.N."

Chief Kerins turned us over to Captain John Culley, a tall, sandy-haired man who is a computer expert, and he



conducted us to a room at the other end of the trailer to show us the computer, an I.B.M. AT, which, he said, was the nerve center of the operation. "This system has forty megabytes of storage capacity, and it has been programmed to pull in information from a wide variety of sources and to regenerate it in a form that will assist the Chief as he makes tactical decisions in the field," Captain Culley said. "We've deployed an awful lot of manpower, and the computer can tell us exactly where our people are at any given time, so that we can shift men quickly to any place where they're needed."

On Wednesday afternoon, as President Reagan's motorcade was driving from the Waldorf to the U.N., we sat in the video van—a small room crammed with television monitors and other communications equipment—and watched the surveillance process in action. Detective Bruce Kennedy, who is a member of the Technical Assistance Response Unit, had been checking various points along the President's route with his six cameras—an open window at Forty-second Street and First Avenue, a group of workmen standing on a ledge at a construction site on Forty-fifth Street, a "Free Pakistan" demonstration at Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza, a mysterious brown Cadillac that had backed into the First Avenue underpass at Forty-eighth Street (it turned out to belong to a maintenance man who had a permit to park there). Then he picked up the President's motorcade as it raced down Second Avenue and turned east on Forty-second Street. Two officers crouching in front of a computer terminal relayed to the command post next door reports from a mobile unit that was travelling with the motorcade. Detective Kennedy pointed to Camera 5, which had just picked up a long line of black limousines snaking through the U.N. gate. "Nakasone went in a few minutes ahead of the President," he said. "Gandhi's still at the hotel. Kohl is walking down from the Waldorf, Ortega is walking *up* First Avenue, and Shultz is crossing First Avenue from the U.S. Mission on foot. I think the U.N. is running out of parking space, so they're starting to stack the motorcades along First Avenue."

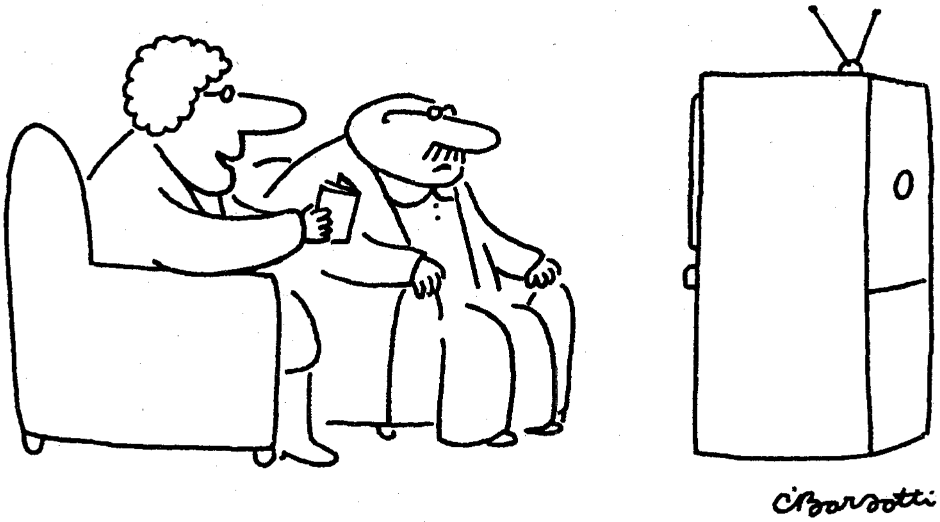
"We know the route for Gandhi," said one of the officers at the computer terminal. "East on Forty-ninth and south on Second."

"Pick him up on Camera 5 when he turns the corner," said Detective Kennedy.

"The F.D.R. pipe bomb was unfounded," said an officer who was holding a telephone. "But the bomb dogs have gone into the U.N. to check out a package in the garage. Harbor is looking at an object floating in the river off Forty-fourth."

Monster Trucks and Mud Bog

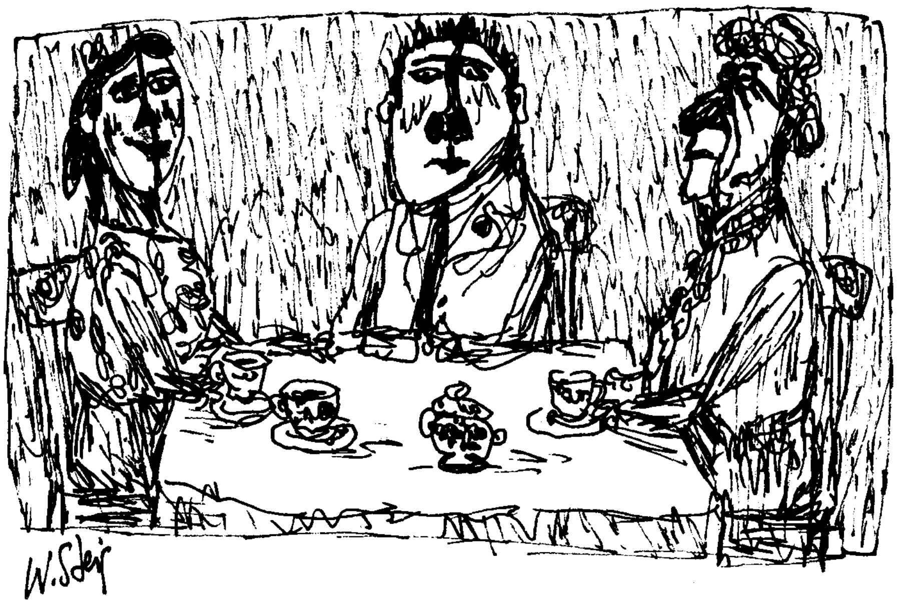
ON the night of the sixth game of the World Series—which turned out to be one of the most exciting World Series games ever—twelve thousand people drove to the Nassau Coliseum and paid as much as $17.50 a ticket to see the United States Hot Rod Association Monster Truck and Mud Bog Fall Nationals. Outside the Coliseum, people waited in long lines. As usual, everybody was named Richie. Inside, they saw on the arena floor a long dirt ramp—known as the mud bog—and on each side of the ramp three undistinguished-looking cars parked close together. Everybody stood for the national anthem; there was a short parade; and then came the car-crushing competition, featuring the Monster Trucks.



"It says 'Heartwarming.'" *"Forget it."*

What Monster Trucks do is drive over cars. Monster Trucks have the bodies of stock cars (usually pickups), huge, seething engines, and wheels between five and six feet tall. The first Monster Truck was built in 1979, when a man in St. Louis named Bob Chandler jacked up a Ford pickup and fitted it with tractor tires and named it Big Foot, to promote his four-wheel-drive shop. Since then, Big Foot has appeared in movies and on TV, and toy companies have reproduced it, and Bob Chandler has built more Big Foots, and a number of people have built Monster Trucks of their own. Today, it is hard to find a ten-year-old boy in this country who has never heard of Big Foot or the Monster Trucks.

The announcer said, "Ladies and gentlemen, my name's Bret Kepner, and I'd like to welcome you and introduce you to some of the best-known names in the Monster Truck world today. First, from Fayetteville, North Carolina, is twenty-seven-year-old Kevin Dabney, in his 1968 Chevy Camaro, Blue Thunder. But before you start to cheer, all you Chevy fans, I should just mention that this monster has a four-hundred-and-fifty-six-cubic-inch *Chrysler* engine under the hood. Each one of those wheels is sixty-six inches tall and weighs twenty-one hundred pounds. The tires are ten-ply steel-belted Firestone radials built for an Army amphibious personnel-carrier, and Kevin got them at a steal from Army surplus for thirty-four hundred dollars apiece. It took him seven years of paychecks to finish that truck, at a cost of approximately a hundred and twenty thousand dollars, and if you're looking for a steering wheel, don't bother. Every single control on that vehicle except the throttle and the brake runs off a helicopter joystick. Next, we have Driver Robert Moore, from Bakersfield, California, in his '69 Chevy truck, the original Cyclops. Robert's got double sets of tractor tires all around and five hundred and thirteen inches of alcohol-burning big-block Chevy engine. But it's not under the hood—that engine sits right next to Robert in the cockpit. Now it's time for the other folks to cheer. Get ready, all you Ford fans, for Mike Spiker, in his 1983 Ford F-250, the All American, the Monster Truck of the South. Mike has developed a system of neon-gas tubes to bring the charge from the coil to the spark plugs. He says it fires quicker and smoother. Raise your hood, Mike, and show how that neon looks flashing in there—like the engine's on fire. And, finally, we've got a 1985 supercharged Ford from Winchester, Virginia, built and driven by Diehl Wilson, and it's called the Virginia Giant. This machine has a hydraulically operated body that raises up five feet off the frame—that makes it one of the 'funny cars' of the crushing circuit—and it is sponsored by Virginia Galleries, crafters of fine hardwood handmade Colonial-style furniture. All right, you Ford fans, let's hear it! ”



Tea for Three

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Monster Trucks make a noise that lifts you up by the roof of your mouth. One by one, the Monster Trucks elephanted toward the parked cars, and then crunched up and over. They did plenty of honking and revving and light-flashing and raising of hoods along the way. The cars—a '75 Plymouth Fury, a '74 Chrysler Newport, a '77 Mercury Marquis, a '77 Ford Torino, a '72 Cadillac Coupe de Ville, a '71 Pontiac LeMans—did not cave in as fast as you might think. "Un-be-*leeee*-vable wheel stand by that Cyclops! " the announcer said. "Uh-oh, looks like he's got a broken axle. Tough break for the Cyclops." The winner, decided by audience vote, was the Virginia Giant. The Monster Trucks drove off. Then a twenty-five-ton and a fifteen-ton Caterpillar front-end loader began pushing the cars over to the edges of the arena, out of the way. Through the Torino's empty rear window you could see on its sagging rear dash two magazines without covers. One magazine had a full-page ad for Chivas Regal Scotch.

Then it was time for the Mud Bog Competition. The object of mud-bog driving is to see how far you can go in the bog before you get stuck. The contestants drove four-wheel-drive vehicles divided into three classes—street, modified, and open. The winner of the street class, Dean Schultz, of Lindenhurst, New York, made it seventy-one feet and one inch. He skidded, bounced, plowed, plunged, and dug in. His front bumper slowly sank out of sight as each wheel spun its own solar system of flying mud. "He's still moving," the announcer said. "Still moving. Still moving. *Still* moving!" The audience leaped to its feet and cheered like a liberated nation.

Lobby

SOMEONE swore he'd seen Ringo —he was sure it was Ringo—down the street at Bojangles, the fried-chicken place. And Paul was supposed to be in town. Definitely. He was staying at the Royalton—that was the rumor, anyway. And so everyone assumed (assumption is the by-blow of hope, of course) that they were going to show up and play. "George has a beard, right?" someone said. "I saw a guy with a beard on Forty-fourth Street." But they didn't come. This sort of thing happens—you send out a lot of invitations, but people have other commitments. Plenty of beautiful women came, but none of them were on the arm of Jerome (Jerry) Zipkin. Jerome (Jerry) Zipkin had a dentist appointment, we heard. Just polishing; nothing painful. Supposedly—*supposedly*—one of the Dionne quintuplets was there. But how can you tell a quintuplet in isolation? Again, this is just a rumor: a guy pointed out this other guy and said he was Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, Secretary-General of the United Nations. Or possibly John Lydon, who used to be Johnny Rotten, of the Sex Pistols. Maybe yes, maybe no.

Who cared about the no-shows, though? So many people did come. It seemed as if our entire building had turned out for the party last Tuesday in honor of the newly renovated lobby. The new lobby—a Louis I lobby—still houses a copy shop, a watchmaker, a tailor, a smoke shop, a stationer, and a post office. But now there is frosted glass, and an arch or two; it is bonhomie verging on anomie but saved by its radical good taste. It is tasteful to the max. The party featured Joe Magdalena, who played the electric piano. He had a CompuRhythm CR-8000 drum machine, which he set at 137 beats per minute for that Stevie Wonder standard "I Just Called to Say I Love You." "I played a party for a building once, but this is the first one for a lobby, and I've been in the business a lot of years," said Mr. Magdalena. "What do you think I should play? 'From the Halls of Montezuma'? You don't ordinarily have lobby parties. You'd think people would be blasé about a lobby."

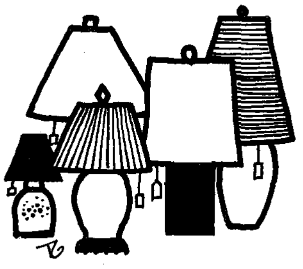
But no one was blasé—not in the least. People were psyched. The Willie Mays "Say Hey" Charitable Foundation has its headquarters in our building, and the magazine *Nonfoods Business*, and Truthtronics, a lie-detector firm. Everyone drank champagne, and ate grapes rolled in almond paste, and reminisced about the lobby. "One time, a guy came through here naked," said Barry Siegel, who operates the smoke shop. "He just walked through—he didn't run. All he had on was shoes and a red bandanna." Mr. Siegel went on to say, "This other time, a guy was standing in line here to buy a Lotto ticket. He had his card filled out and everything, right? And he dropped dead of a stroke."

THE FALL OF TEXAS

THE world was supposed to end on a Saturday night in March of 1962. Some medieval astrologer had absolutely predicted it, and for a while the approaching cataclysm got a lot of play in the pages of the *Daily News*. You never believe such things, of course, but you don't entirely disbelieve them, either. People made jokes or decided to have parties. The idea was to go out with a bang.

I was twenty-six. I don't think I've ever felt older. In three years I'd had thirteen lovers. The count may even have been higher. There were the serious ones, who took months of your life, and all the transitional ones in between, when you were trying to recover. Those were the ones you tended to forget, and if you passed one on Second Avenue you'd give a distant nod and walk on too fast for any conversation. I once asked one of them, "Why are we here?" as we were taking off our clothes, and I remember his answer, though not his name. "If you don't know," he said, "I can't help you."

I was living then in a two-room walkup on East Seventh Street above a linoleum store. My landlord was the linoleum king of the lower East Side. Linoleum was his passion; he took no interest in his real estate. I'd moved into his building with a saxophone player named Arnie Raff, who met a rich girl in East Hampton one weekend and moved in with her and never returned—even to pick up his records, which I kept in boxes for a while, then put back on their shelves and played until the music wore out all Arnie Raff associations and became mine. Finally, he remembered where his records were—the great sides he'd had ever since he was a kid and had to steal his brother's draft card to get into Birdland to hear Charlie Parker. "Hey, Joanna, why don't I just come on by and get them?" he said, and I said, "No, you can't ever walk in here again, Arnie. There's nothing you can take out of here." I'd always thought of myself as a gentle person, and now here was a piece of someone's life and identity I wasn't giving back, as if I'd hardened without realizing it. It's better to be tough than sad, I thought.



I would have married Arnie Raff, although it seems incredible now. The illusion of kindness was in the chestnut color of his hair and eyes and the warm, Russian-looking mustache over his lips, which hid, as it turned out, a small mouth of real meanness. I could never have loved him clean-shaven. He was much more bourgeois than I was, which made me feel safe. He yelled at me about my cooking and sanded the floorboards of our apartment and stripped most of the plaster off a wall of brick, as if he meant to live there forever.

After he left, I became aware that the apartment had begun to disintegrate. Little pieces of it kept breaking off or falling down. There was a crack in the ceiling above the bed. I used to lie there and stare up at it. First it looked like the outline of a cloud drawn by a fine black pen, then the cloud began to resemble Texas. Gradually, Texas began to look three-dimensional. It made my various lovers nervous. "That ceiling's going to fall," they'd point out accusingly, as if by inviting them there I'd endangered them deliberately. I believed Texas would fall someday, but I didn't believe it would fall on me. So far, something had held it up, and no one I personally knew had ever been crushed by a falling ceiling. I thought when it did fall I'd be in Rome. A friend of mine had just found an apartment there with room enough for me, and at black times I'd remember to say "Rome" to myself as if I were really going to get an airplane ticket and go there. It was the most exotic of the ideas I had about turning myself into a luckier person.

I was home the night Texas came down. The man I was with was married and was always holding up his wrist so I could look at the luminous numbers on his watch in the dark and tell him what time it was. He was a very nearsighted poet who could see nothing without his glasses, and he'd put them on top of a bookcase that jutted out from the wall behind the bed. As I lay in his embrace, I heard a loud ticking, as if he were wearing a grandfather clock. The ticking grew louder and faster and he said, "My God, what's that?" and we both sat up. Plaster rained down around us, falling on the pillow where our heads had been, crashing onto the bookcase, severing his glasses neatly at the bridge but, amazingly, leaving the lenses intact. He put on both halves of the glasses and said in an awed voice, "I guess I'd better go. I've never had an experience like this. That was a close one, wasn't it?" I helped him find his clothes, and we brushed off the white dust as best we could, and, pinching his glasses together so they wouldn't fall off, he made his way home to his wife.

I turned on all the lights and sat up the rest of the night staring at the enormous hole where Texas had been, wondering what it meant to find yourself alive when you'd done nothing in particular to insure your self-preservation.

THAT week, a card arrived in the mail, silver print on black paper:

DANCE THE END OF THE WORLD AWAY.
MAKE THE APOCALYPSE A NIGHT
TO REMEMBER.
R.S.V.P. REGRETS ONLY.

You had to pay attention to an invitation like that. It made me feel hopeful, though by then I'd been to enough parties to know whom you could expect to see—Arnie Raff, for example, or the poet in his new glasses turning up with his wife, or the old painters who liked to dance with you ostentatiously, wheezing for breath, while their women exchanged ironies near the wine table.

I took some of the rent money, since the landlord wasn't rushing to make repairs, and went to Klein's on Fourteenth Street and bought a dress. A slithery shift of something that looked like silk and was so much brighter than anything I had—all zigzags of purple, blue, and green—that I didn't quite know who I was in it. I could imagine wearing it in Rome if the world didn't blow up.

I wasn't one of those who flourished at those famous downtown parties of the sixties. I knew what they were about, aside from abandon and ambition. You put yourself out there to be seen, to be taken up, to be judged in the flickering of an eye. I'd slip into watching and become, I thought, invisible. Then someone would accuse me of checking out, and I'd make an effort for a while to simulate presence. Watchers stand alone, which is against the rules of parties. They're like pieces that have fallen out of a kaleidoscope when all the other pieces are being shaken up so new patterns can be formed. It's the kaleidoscopic

I AM NOT IN AT THE MOMENT. WHEN YOU HEAR THE "BEEP" LEAVE YOUR NAME AND MESSAGE.

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nature of parties that makes them necessary, or things might stay too much the same.

The art scene never stood still for long. There were always people coming and going, surfacing overnight, disappearing into thin air without ever sending a postcard to a friend. People gave up on New York and went to Paris, California, Majorca, Mexico City. Some started dropping out of life altogether, people as young as I was mostly, leaping off rooftops into space, diving from windows and landing so gracefully there was only a little blood around the corners of the mouth.

I remember the tall, beautiful, coffee-colored girl with strange green eyes who'd appeared out of nowhere that winter and was seen at all the artists' parties for a while, wildest of all the dancers. Her name was Annabel—it was the season of Annabel. She had a little baby named Anton, whom she'd carry everywhere in her arms and put to sleep in back bedrooms among piles of coats and ride home with at dawn in taxis with various infatuated strangers. She moved into a railroad flat on St. Marks Place, where immediately there were surprising numbers of hangers-on, smoking joints and drinking wine while Annabel made big pots of rice and beans, West Texas style, on her three-burner stove as if she were everyone's mother. You could go there on Sundays for brunch and eat bacon and grits and dance to Ray Charles on the phonograph at eleven-thirty in the morning. "Ooh, don't go," Annabel would say if she caught you heading for the door. "I hate an empty house worse than anything."

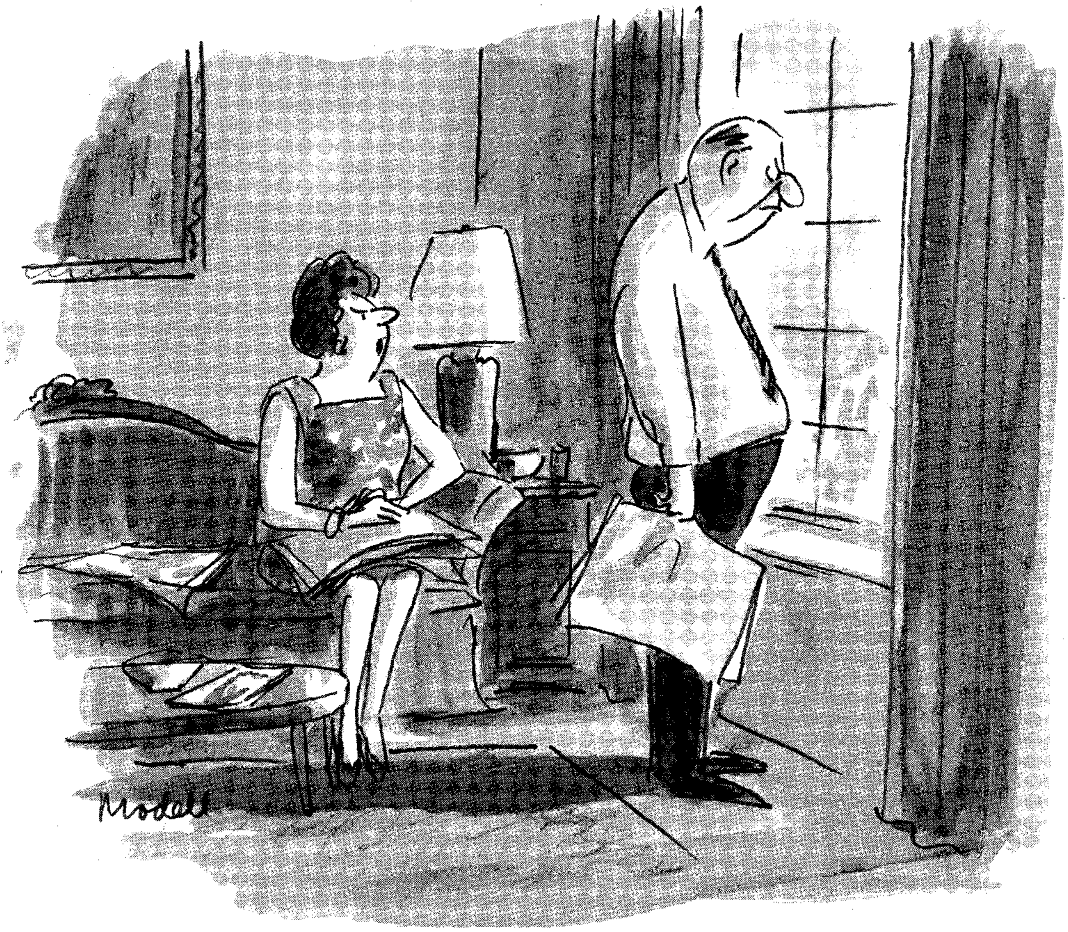
The story went around that Annabel was in hiding from her ex-husband, a remittance man from an old Boston family whom she'd met in Paris while she was modelling. But she never acted like someone who was hiding.

One week, though, at the beginning of the summer, people were asking, "Has anyone seen Annabel?" Nobody had. Annabel left her baby with a friend one afternoon and never came back for him. She told the friend she had an important date. She wore an armful of ivory bracelets and a little green silk shift and new gold sandals. She went rushing off to meet some deadbeat, who gave her an overdose of heroin. After several days, an electrician found her body in a cellar on Avenue C.

I realized later that in an indirect way Annabel helped to change the direction of my life, though I might never have thought it if she hadn't died the way she did. We always smiled at each other, but I can't recall that we ever had a conversation. I was never even sure she knew my name. It surprised me, in fact, that she sent me one of those black-and-silver cards.

She sent out so many—to more people than could ever have fitted into her apartment. Even early in the evening, there was a fancy uptown crowd no one knew piling out of taxis in the rain, pushing their way in past Annabel's friends drinking wine out of paper cups on the stairs. In her brief season, this was the big event.

Upstairs, it looked like Halloween. Annabel had draped all the furniture in black sheets and lit candles. She



"Are you sure it's the Op-Ed page that has you boiling, or is it something I said?"

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wafted from room to room, very high and giggly, a lost child in a silver gown. People milled around in the dark in their wet coats, spilling beer on each other and saying, "Hi, I didn't know it was you," in hushed voices. Somewhere in the back, the baby woke up and started crying. "What is this crap, anyway?" someone said drunkenly and turned on the lights.

Too much had been expected, of course, so all the guests felt cheated. They also hated being caught with their imaginations down. Where was the gaiety, the wit, the inspired madness with which artists would greet the apocalypse? "Tonight, Marcel Duchamp would not be impressed," one of the old painters commented loudly.

From then on it was like a party for someone going away whom no one gave a damn about anymore—not even Annabel, who drifted into a room with someone and locked the door. Later, people said she'd been trying to tell the rest of us she saw doom up ahead, but that night no one cared.

I didn't feel much like dancing, so I walked back to where the baby was. I wanted him to stop crying. His head banged against my shoulder when I picked him up. I kept repeating, "Sh-h-h, Mommy's coming soon," though I knew that wasn't the case, and patted his bottom, which was very wet. I felt utterly inept. Suddenly he was quiet, so I put him down in his crib. "Go to sleep, Anton," I said, pretending authority, but I heard him wail as soon as I walked back into the party.

People were doing the latest thing, something called the Twist, in which a man and woman rotated their hips in front of each other but never touched. I poured a glass of wine, looked around the room, and thought very calmly, There is no one.

A man came up from the street. I noticed him because he wasn't wearing a coat—just a heavy gray sweater and a green scarf around his neck—and I remember thinking he must be cold. He had thick brown hair, wet from the rain, and a face that had been used a lot—fierce eyes set deep in smashed bone, the right one angled down sharply. He was a very good-looking man, so I decided he would be dangerous—spoiled rotten by women, no doubt. For a while, he stood near the door at the edge of things, like a player waiting his turn in a game, sizing up his next move. Now and then, he'd tighten his lips, pressing them together as if against some oblique thought he couldn't voice to anyone. He caught me staring, so I stepped back a little behind a dancing couple. When I looked again, the party had swallowed him up.

A little later, he was standing right in front of me. He took me in—I don't know how else to say it. My tremendous uncertainty, my habit of watching, my ridiculously bright dress. It was as if he could read my bones—it wasn't that he wanted anything. "Why do you hang back?" he said and walked away.

I stood amazed where he left me, wanting to run after him and find out who he was. But his fierceness really scared me. I didn't want him telling me I'd made a mistake, that he'd said all he was ever going to say to me in one question I couldn't even answer, that suddenly seemed the entire painful puzzle of my life.

He was one of those people who'd probably never surface again, who kept wandering in and out. He'd disappeared by the time I got brave enough to look for him.

To tell the truth, I wasn't sorry. I thought of his blue eyes and his handsomeness and how the night might have gone.

Down on St. Marks Place, in the cold darkness, the world was still intact, and I carried his question all the way home. —JOYCE JOHNSON

THREE THOUSAND DOLLARS

MY mother doesn't know that I owe my father three thousand dollars. What happened was this: My father sent me three thousand dollars to pay my college tuition. That was the deal he and my mom had made. We'd apply for financial aid without him, to get a lower tuition, and then he'd send me a check, and then I'd put the check in my bank account and write one of my own checks out to the school. This made sense not because my father is rich but because he makes a lot more money than my mother does—she's a teacher—and if we could get a better deal using her income instead of his, there was no reason not to. Only, when the money came, instead of giving it to the school, I spent it. I don't even know what I spent it on—books and things, movies. The school never called me in about it. They just kept sending these bills to my mother, saying we were delinquent in our payments. That's how my father found out. My mother kept sending him the bills, he kept looking on them for the money he'd sent me, and I kept telling him that the school's computer was making an error and that I'd drop by the office one day after class and clear it up.

So when I came home to New York for the summer my mother was frantic, because the school had called her and she couldn't understand how we could owe them so much money. I explained to her, somehow, that what we owed them was a different three thousand dollars—that during the winter the school had cut our financial aid in half. My mother called my father to ask him to send us the extra money, and he said that he wanted to talk to me.

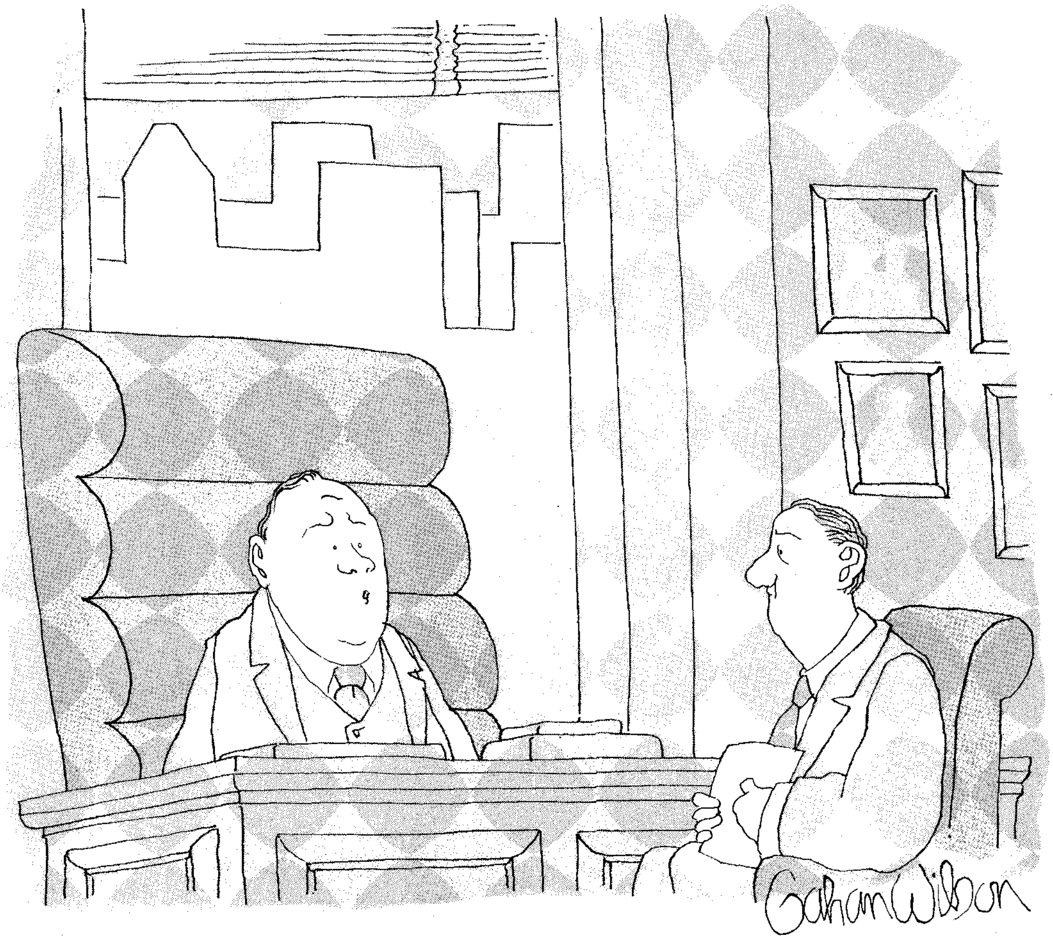
I waited till the next day so I could call him at his office. My stepmother's in finance, and she gets crazy whenever money comes up—her nightmare, I think, is of a river of money flowing from my father to me without veering through her—so I thought it would be better to talk to him when she wasn't around. My father has his own advertising agency in Chicago—Paul Weller Associates. I've seen him at his job when I've visited him out there, and he's pretty good. His company does all the ads for a big Midwestern supermarket chain, and mostly what he does is supervise on these huge sets while camera crews stand around filming fruit. It's a really big deal. The fruit has to look just right. My father stands there in a coat and tie, and he and a bunch of other guys keep bending over and making sure that the fruit is O.K.—shiny-looking. There are all these other people standing around with water vapor and gloss. One word from my father and a thousand spray cans go off.

When he gets on the phone, I am almost too nervous to talk to him, though his voice is slow and far off, surrounded by static. I ask him to please send more money. He says he won't. I ask why, and he says because it would be the wrong thing to do. He doesn't say anything for a moment, and then I tell him that I agree with him, that I think he is right not to send the money. He doesn't say anything to acknowledge this, and there is a long pause during which I feel the distance between us growing.

Just before he gets off the phone, he says, "What I'm really curious about, Richard, is what your mother thinks of all this," and this wakes me up, because he doesn't seem to realize that I haven't told her yet. I was afraid to. Before I came home, I thought of about twenty different ways of telling her, but once she was right there in front of me it just seemed unbearable. What I'm afraid of now is that my father will find that out, and then he will tell her himself. "I mean," he says, "if I were her, I probably couldn't bear having you in the house. What is she planning to do? Isn't the school calling you up? I can't imagine she has the money to pay them. Isn't she angry at you, Rich?"

I say, "She's pretty angry."

"I hope so," my father says. "I hope she's making you feel terrible. When I talked to her on the phone yesterday—



"Didn't they tell you on the way in that I'm important?"

and we only talked for a couple of seconds—she seemed mostly concerned with getting me to give you this money, but I hope that deep down she's really upset about this. Tell her it's no great tragedy if you don't go back to school in the fall. You can get a job in the city and I'll be happy to pay your tuition again next year. I'm sorry, but it just doesn't feel right for me to keep supporting you while you keep acting the way you've been acting, which to me seems morally deficient."

My mother is tall, with light hair and gray, watery eyes. She is a jogger. She has been jogging for six years, and as she's gotten older her body has gotten younger-looking. Her face has gotten older, though. There are lines around her lips and in the corners of her eyes, as if she has taken one of those statues without arms or a head and put her own head on top of it. She teaches art at a grammar school a few blocks up from our house, and the walls of our apartment are covered with her drawings. That's the way she teaches. She stands over these kids while she has them drawing a still-life or a portrait or something, and if they're having trouble she sits down next to them to show them what to do, and usually she ends up liking her own work so much that she brings it home with her. We have all these candlesticks and clay flowerpots that she made during class. She used to teach up in Greenwich, Connecticut, which is where we lived before she and my dad got divorced, right before I started high school. Every summer, she and a bunch of other teachers rent a house together in Wellfleet; she will be leaving New York to go up there in six days, so I *only* have to keep her from finding out until then.

When I get off the phone, she is in the living room reading the newspaper. She gives me this ready-for-the-worst look and asks, "What did he say?"

I explain to her that I will not be going back to college in September. Instead, I will be staying in the apartment and working until I have paid the school the rest of the money.

My mother gets angry. She stands up and folds the paper together and stuffs it into the trash. "Not in this apartment," she says.

"Why not?" I ask. "It's big enough."

LIVES OF THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY POETESSES

As girls they were awkward and peculiar,
wept in church or refused to go at all.
Their mothers saw right away no man would marry them.
So they must live at the sufferance of others,
timid and queer as governesses out of Chekhov,
malnourished on theology, boiled eggs, and tea,
but given to outbursts of pride that embarrass everyone.
After the final quarrel, the grand
renunciation, they retire upstairs to the attic
or to the small room in the cheap off-season hotel
and write *Today I burned all your letters* or
I dreamed the magnolia blazed like an avenging angel
and when I woke I knew I was in Hell.
No one is surprised when they die young,
having left all their savings to a wastrel nephew,
to be remembered for a handful
of "minor but perfect" lyrics,
a passion for jam or charades,
and a letter still preserved in the family archives:
"I send you herewith the papers of your aunt
who died last Tuesday in the odor of sanctity
although a little troubled in her mind
by her habit, much disapproved of by the ignorant,
of writing down the secrets of her heart."

—Katha Pollitt

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"A boy your age should be in college. Your friends are in college. Your father went to college. I'd better call him back." She walks to the phone, which sits on the windowsill.

"Why?" I ask quickly. "He said he wasn't going to do it."

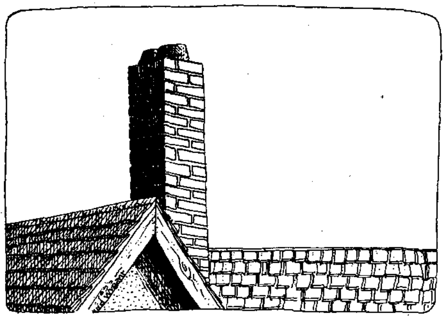
"Well, of course, that's what he'd say to you. He knows you're afraid of him." She sees I'm going to protest this. "Who could blame you? Who wouldn't be afraid of a man who won't even support his own son's education?"

"He said he doesn't have the money."

"And you believe him?" she asks. "With two Volvos and a town house and cable TV? Let him sell one of his cars if he has to. Let him stop watching HBO. Where are his priorities?"

"I'm not his responsibility."

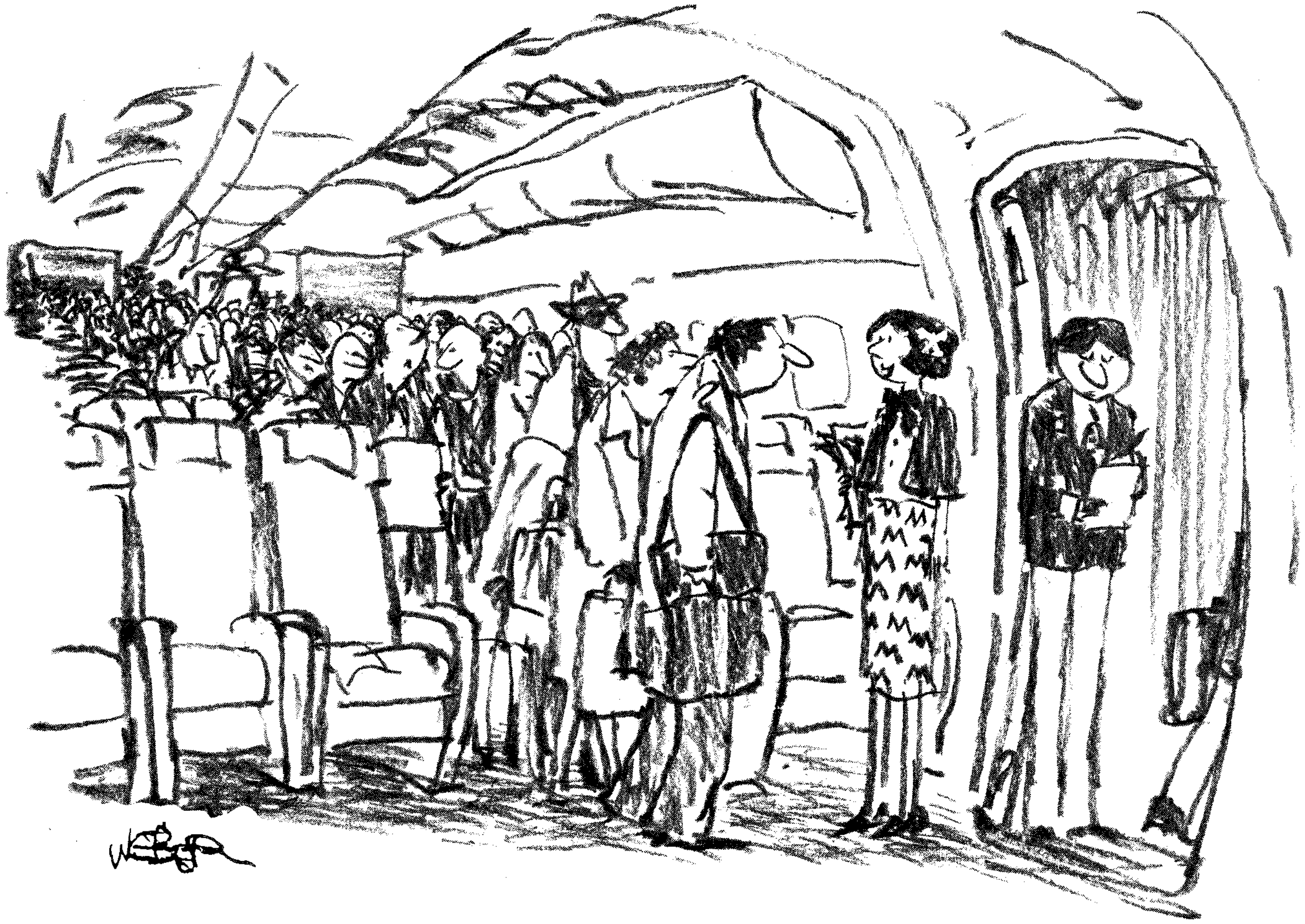
"Oh, no. You're just his son, that's all; I forgot. Why are you protecting him?"



I look up, and my mother's eyes widen a little—part of her question—and it feels as if she is seeing something in my face, so I realize I'd better get out of the room. "I'm not protecting him," I say. "It's just that you always want everything to be somebody's fault. It's the school's fault. It's nobody's fault. It's no great tragedy if I don't go back to school in the fall; you're the only person who thinks so. Why can't you just accept things, like everyone else?" I walk into my bedroom, shutting the door behind me. I lie on my bed and look up at the ceiling, where the summer bugs have already formed a sooty layer inside the bottom of my light fixture. My ears are hot.

Our apartment is small. There are only the two bedrooms, the living room, the bathroom, and the kitchen, and so if you want to be alone it's pretty impossible. My mother comes in after a few minutes. She has calmed down. She walks over to the air-conditioner and turns it on, then waves her hand in front of the vents to make sure that cold air is coming out. I sit up and frown at her.

She sits down next to me and puts her arm around my shoulders. "I'm sorry you're so upset," she says. As she



"Thanks for flying Mammoth, and for letting us have the chance to make a fuss over you."

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talks, she rubs the back of my neck. "But I just think that there are a lot of things we can do before you have to go and look for a full-time job. There are relatives we can call. There are loans we can take out. There are a lot of avenues open to us."

"O.K., Mom."

"I know it must be pretty hard on you, having a father like this." She gives me time to speak, then says, "I mean, a man who won't even pay for his son's school."

"It's not that," I say. "It's not even that I'm that upset. It's just that I don't want us to be beholden to him anymore. I don't even like him very much."

My mom laughs. "What's to like?" she says.

I laugh with her. "It's just that he's so creepy."

"You don't have to tell me. I was married to him."

"Why did you marry him?" I ask.

"He was different when I met him."

"How different could he be?"

Mom laughs, shaking her head. Her eyes blank a little, remembering. She was twenty when she met my father—a year older than I am now. I imagine her in a green flannel skirt and blue knee socks. "I don't know," she says, looking past me. "Not very." We laugh together again. "I don't know. I wanted to get away from my parents, I guess."

"Who could blame you?" I say, but I can tell from a shift in her face that I have pushed too far. Her father died two years back.

"What do you mean?" she asks, turning back to me.

"I don't know," I say. "I mean, you were young."

She nods, as if this fact, remembering it, comes as something of a surprise to her. She blinks. "I was young," she says.

I GET a job working at a B. Dalton bookstore. The manager has to fill out some forms, and when he asks me how long I will be working—for the whole year or just for the summer—I say, "Just for the summer," without thinking, and by the time I realize, he has already written it down and it doesn't seem worth the trouble of making him go back and change it. Still, I go through the rest of the day with the feeling that I've done something wrong. It's the store on Fifth Avenue, and it's not a bad place to work. I am sent to the main floor, to the middle register, where old women come in pairs and shuffle through the Romance section. I eat lunch in a little park a block from the store, where a man-made waterfall keeps tumbling down and secretaries drink diet soda. There is a cool breeze, because of the water. It is the second week of the summer, and on returning from lunch I am told I will have Wednesday off, because it is the Fourth of July.

Riding the bus home, I begin thinking that maybe my mother called my father anyway. It's terrible. The bus keeps stopping and people keep piling in, and meanwhile I am imagining their conversation going on. If I could make the bus go faster, maybe I could get home in time to stop them. I try to make mental contact with the bus driver by concentrating. I think, Skip the next stop; but he, out of loyalty to the other passengers or simple psychic deafness, doesn't, and instead the bus keeps stopping and people keep getting off and on. Walking into our building, I get the feeling everyone knows. Even the people on the elevator scowl. Maybe if I had told my mother myself, I could have softened it somehow. What would upset her now is not only the money—although the money would be a big part of it—but also that I tried to put something over on her. I am almost afraid to open our door. "Hello," I call, stepping inside.

As it turns out, my mother isn't home. There is a note on the table. She has gone shopping. I look at the note for a while, to see if I can figure anything out from it. For example, it is a short note. Would she usually write a longer one? It isn't signed "Love" or anything—just "Mom," in the scratchy way she draws her pictures.

I hang my jacket in the closet and then turn on my mom's answering machine. There is one hangup, and then a message from my father. It makes my whole body go cold. His voice sounds farther away than when we talked the last time. "Richard?" he says. His voice is slow. "This is your father. I just wanted to call to see how things were going. I had an interesting discussion with your mother this afternoon, and we can talk about it later, if you'd like to. Call back if you get a chance." Then there is the clatter of his phone being hung up, and then a little electronic squawk as the connection is broken, which the machine has recorded. I play it again, but there is no way of telling just what he and Mom talked about. I walk into the bathroom and splash cold water on my face and look in the mirror. Then I try reading my mom's note again, but all I can really make it say is that she has gone to the supermarket.

My mother comes home, carrying two big bags of groceries. She pushes the door open with her shoulder. "Can you give me a hand?" she says.

I stand up and take the bags from her and carry them into the kitchen. They are heavy even for me. I hold them close to my chest, where the edges brush against my nose, giving me their heavy, dusty smell. My mom stands in the dining area. She rests one hand on the table. She is wearing running shorts and a T-shirt that on the front says "Perrier" and on the back has the name and date of a race she ran. "Any messages?" she asks me.

I look at her, but I can't tell anything from her face, either. She looks angry, but that could be just because it was hot outside, or because there was too long a line at the supermarket. "I didn't look," I answer. "Don't you even say hello anymore?"

"Hello," she says. She picks up her note and holds it so I can see. "You could throw this away, you know," she says. "Or are you saving it for any particular reason?"

"No, you can throw it away."

"That's nice. How about you throw it away?"

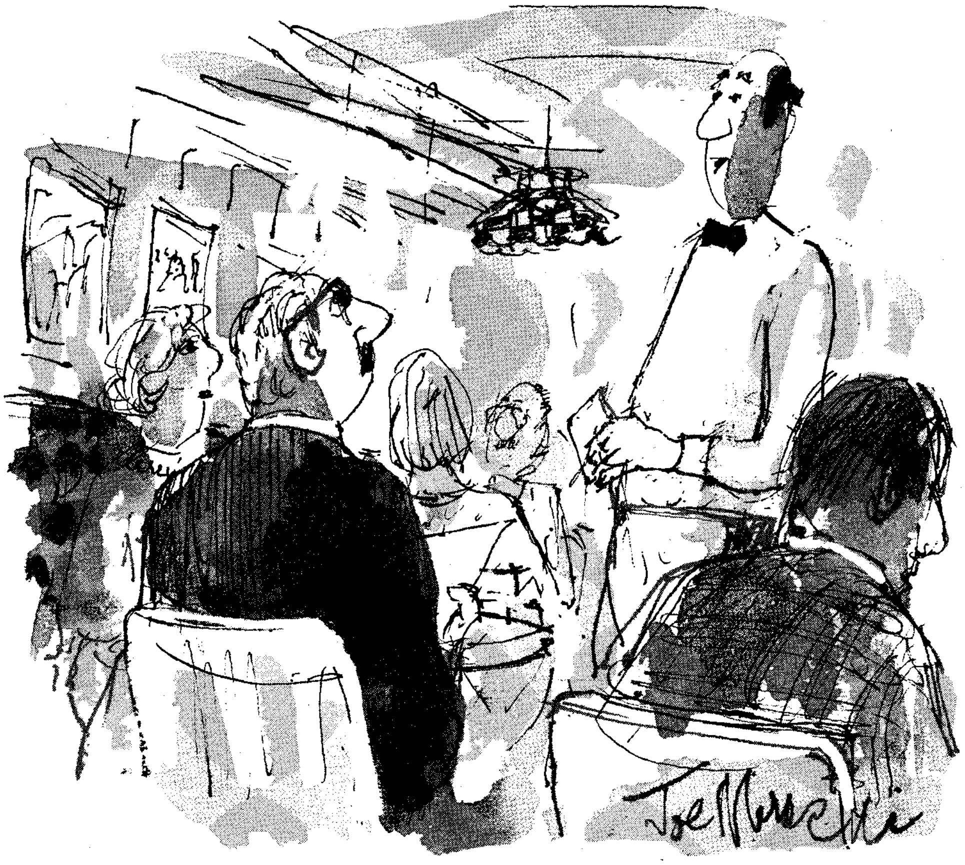
"I'm unloading the groceries right now."

She puts the note back down on the table and then walks into the living room. I unload the rest of the groceries. There is a box of spaghetti, Tropicana orange juice, brown rice, pita bread, a few plain Dannon yogurts. I put everything away and then I fold up the bags and stuff them into the broom closet, where we save them for garbage.

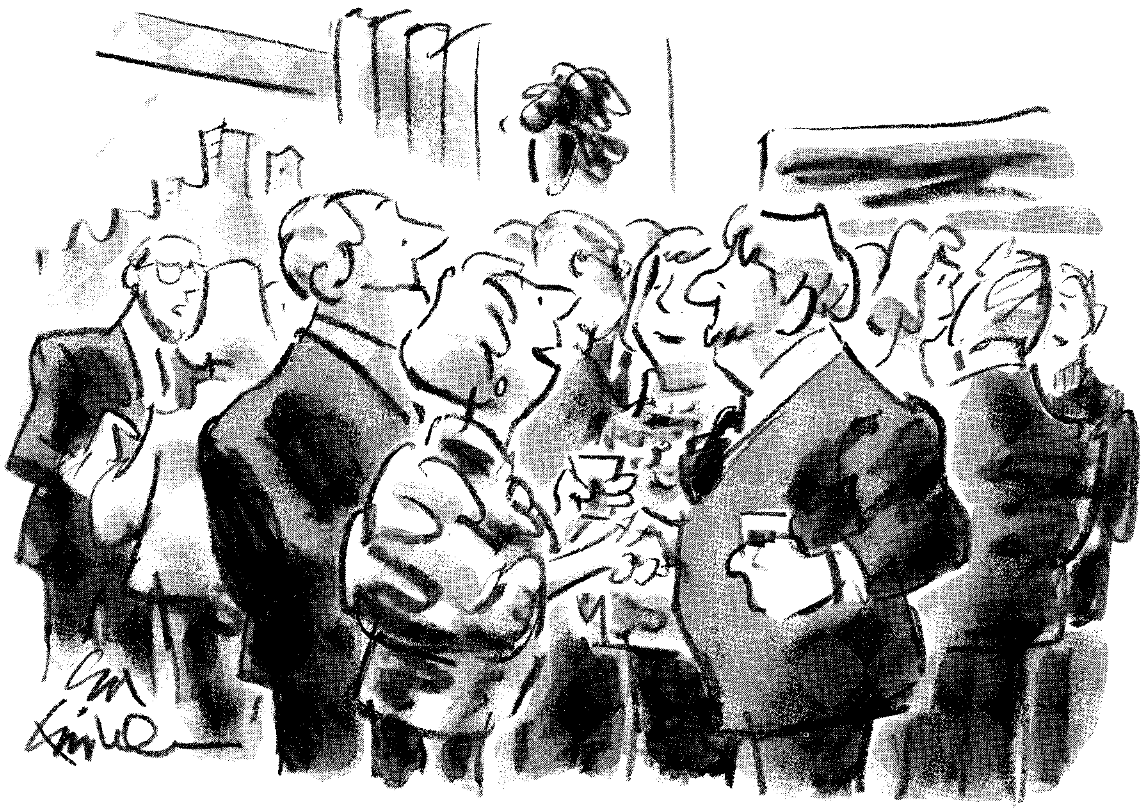
In the living room I hear my mom turn on the machine. There is the hangup, and then my father's message begins again. "Richard?" he says. "This is your father." I walk into the living room. Mom is standing over the machine, one hand on the buttons. "Oh, God," she says, in a bored way when she hears his voice, and she shuts it off. Then she turns around and looks at me. I am standing near the wall. "Why do you have that funny look on your face, Richard?" she asks.

I shrug. "How was your day?" I say.

"Bad." She steps over her chair and sits down on the sofa. From the way she arranges herself, I can tell she is upset. She keeps her arms folded across her stomach, and there is something compressed and angry about her face. The way her lips are pressed together—and also something around her eyes. "You want to make me some tea?"



"The meat and potatoes are good today."



"Freddie says you're an optimist. I have a neighbor who's an optimist."

• •

"What happened?" I ask.

"Nothing happened. I ran. I went shopping. I spoke to your father."

I pull a chair over from the table and sit down across from her. I count to five and then ask, "What did he say?"

She shakes her head and laughs through her nose. "Oh, God. He was awful, Richard. Just awful. Right when he got on the phone, he started asking if you'd found a job, and then when I asked him if he was planning to pay the rest of your tuition he laughed and said of course not. He said it was time for you to learn to take care of yourself. He said it was going to be good for you. I couldn't talk to him. Really, Richard, he was awful. I mean it. Just awful."

"I told you not to call him."

"Well, then, I was stupid, Richard."

"Are you going to call him again?"

"How do I know if I'm going to call him again? Not if he keeps acting that way on the phone to me. But I can't pay the school myself." Her lips go back to being tight, and she pulls her arms closer together, so that each hand curls under the opposite elbow.

It occurs to me that what's pressing down on her face is the money we owe the school. "Did the school call again?" I guess.

She nods. "Yesterday."

"Don't call him," I say.

"Thanks, Richard. You want to get me some tea?"

"How about 'please'?"

"How about throwing that note away? Or are you planning to leave it there till Christmas?"

THE next day, I get the same feeling that she has called my father again. I go outside during lunch to phone her. It is very hot, and the undersides of my arms are soggy. I have to walk about two blocks down Fifth Avenue before I can find a free phone, and then when I dial our number there is no answer. I think I may have dialled the number wrong, because even if no one is home there should still be the machine, but when I try again there is still no answer. As I hang up, I catch my reflection in the shiny front of the phone for a second and I look awful, sweaty. The rest of the day is terrible. I can hardly work. I keep ringing up the paperbacks as Calendars and the children's books as Software. On the way home, I think that even if my father didn't tell her I will have to tell her myself. I'm afraid that if I don't something awful will happen, like we'll never speak to each other again or something. But when I get home she is sitting on the sofa, reading the newspaper with her feet up on a chair, and when I walk into the living room she smiles at me, and it just doesn't seem like the right time. I take off my tie and blazer and then pour myself a glass of milk and sit down next to her. She smells like Ben Gay—a strong, wintergreenish smell—which is what she rubs on her legs after running.

"How was your day?" she asks me. She has a mug of tea on the cushion next to her, and when I sit down she folds the newspaper and picks up the mug.

"Fine," I say. Then I ask, "Did you go somewhere? I tried calling around noon, but there was no answer."

"I drove up to Greenwich," she says.

"Why didn't you turn on the machine?"

"What are you, the police inspector? I didn't feel like it, that's why."

"But why'd you drive up to Greenwich?"

She laughs. "I feel like I should have one of those big lights on me." She brings her arms very close in to her sides and speaks very quickly, like a suspect: "I don't know. I don't know why I went up to Greenwich." She drinks from her cup, which she holds with both hands. Then she shakes her head and laughs.

We eat dinner. When we lived in Greenwich, she used to teach art in the summers, too. They had a summer day program, with a bunch of little kids running around—I was in it, too, when I was younger—and she used to take them out into the fields and have them draw trees and flowers. She hated it. While we are eating, I get the idea that maybe this is what she went up there for, to talk to someone about this job. Dinner is cool things: tuna fish and pita bread and iced coffee. My mother has a salad. We don't talk for a while. All we do is crunch.

"Why'd you go up to Greenwich?" I ask her again.

She looks up at me, a little angry. The rule, I know, is that we don't talk about anything once she has clearly finished talking about it. "I felt like it," she says. Then she forks some more salad into her mouth, and maybe thinks that her response is off key, because she says, "I had a great idea while I was up there, though."

"What?"

"I thought we could go up tomorrow. You know, for the Fourth of July. See the fireworks. I thought it'd be a lot of fun."

"It sounds great."

"Yes," she says, "I thought you'd like that."

ALL SOULS' MORNING

Rain splatting wet leaves; citrine light; the cat
Scratching the sofa; the house dead quiet but for
The furnace thumping in the cellar; that man, my
Neighbor, out on Locust Road as he is each morning
No matter the weather, walking his dog—bent shoulders
And heavy head, cherry-red leash dangling from a
Pale hand, his dog the dark tan of oak leaves when
They turn and hang and enter the depths of winter. I see
A huge patience in his stoop, in the ghostly cigarette
Limp between his lips, in the stiff tilt of his head,
The treadle action of his passage, the orange surprise
Of a golf umbrella blossoming from his fist, the loll
Of the dog by his side as they return up Locust, both
Eager to be in again out of the cold wet day that's
Breaking round them. I'm thinking how, bound to
One another, they've been at this for years,
When my father comes leaning, as he always did,
Up Clareville Road, not far from where he's buried,
Bent against the bitter wind that always tunnelled it
In winter, his black umbrella furled, our small
Black mongrel, Brandy, straining the leash toward home
Where my mother fusses the tea together. Five o'clock
And Dublin's dark already, it being winter, fat raindrops
Scudding the wind and mixing with his lost thoughts
As he hastens after his dog, home to the wife who, when he
Leaves her behind him, will run aground with grief
At being no one in the world. This is the bottom line,
I guess: we button our habits to the chin and set out
Walking very fast with death. A bluejay's screech
Rattles the skeleton of our locust tree; the road
Outside my window is empty again, and rain gives way
To sky-bright weather, gray aquarium light making
Luminous the air, coating the dark tar with mirror-pools
Of periwinkle blue. A rising wind tides among the
Surviving leaves, and a swallow flock of dead ones
Joyrides down Locust Road, cold no more, borne off. *All*
Night, you said, when we wakened warm by one another,
I was seeing shapes widen round the room, hearing them
Whisper in the wall. This minute, my hungry children are
Clattering to the kitchen for breakfast. The house quickens.

—EAMON GRENNAN

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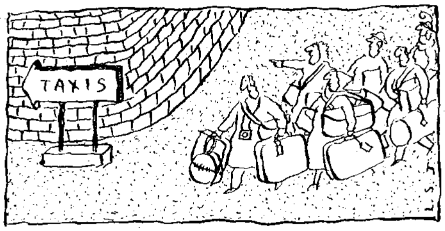
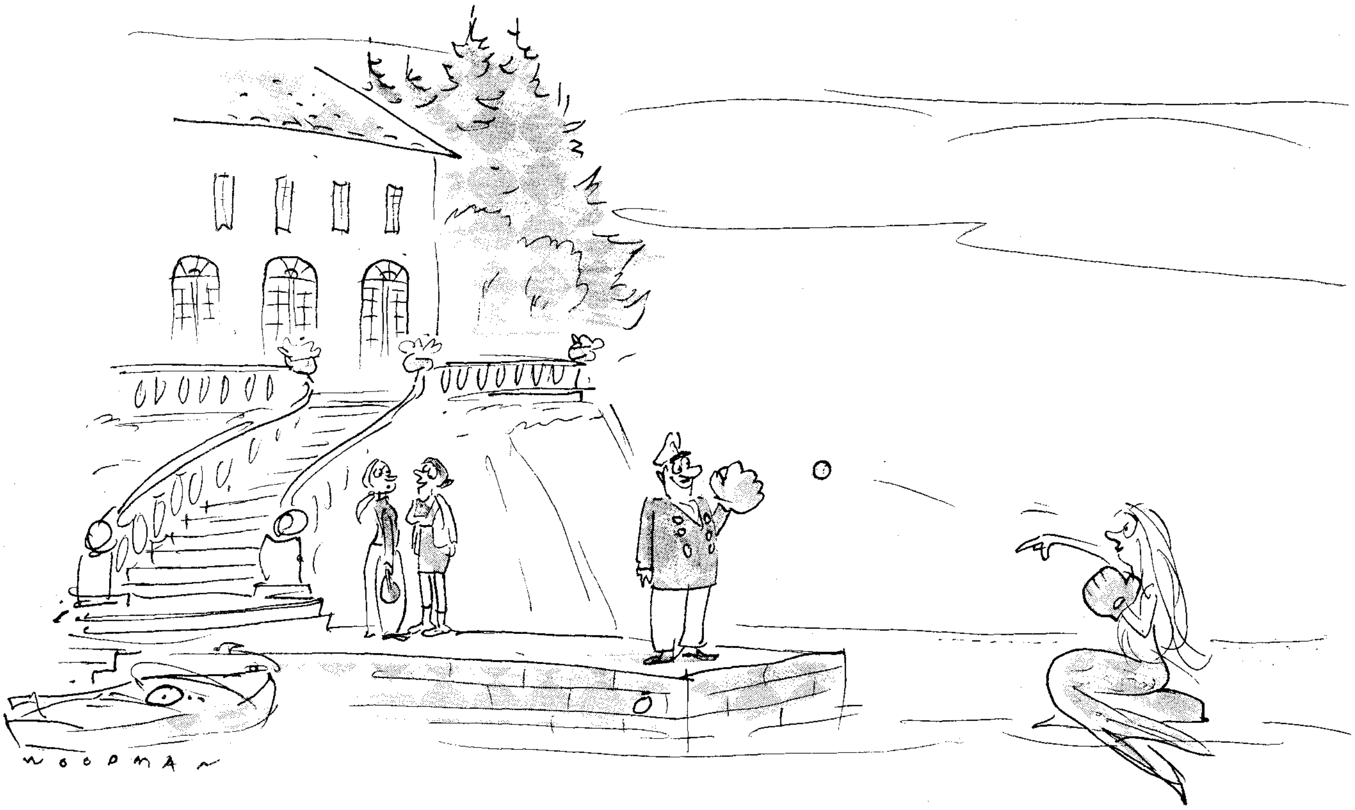
I SLEEP late the next day, and when I wake up she has gone jogging. She has left me a note saying so, which I throw away. She comes back sweaty and happy, drinking a bottle of club soda, and I ask her why she isn't drinking tea, and we joke, and it all feels very nice, until I remember about Dad and the money and her job and then I feel awful again, because it seems as if all our talking and joking is going on in midair, without anything underneath it to hold it up. We eat lunch, and then my mom makes some sandwiches and we get into our car and drive up the throughway to Connecticut. It's fun seeing the place where you used to live. We drive by our old house, and it looks the same, though there are some toys in the back yard and some lawn furniture—chairs and a big wooden table—which we didn't own. I get this funny feeling while we are in the car that we could still be living inside, as a family; that my father could walk out on the lawn and wave to us, or that if we stayed long enough we might see ourselves going past a window or walking over to sit at that big table. When we get to the high school, cars are everywhere, loading and unloading, families carrying big plastic coolers filled with food. I ask my mother if it was always this popular. "Yes," she says. "You just don't remember." We have to drive up the street about two blocks to find a space. By the time we have taken our own cooler out of the trunk, two more cars have already parked in front of us.

The fireworks are always held at the same place. The people sit on the athletic field and the fireworks are set off from behind the baseball diamond, about a hundred yards away. Thousands of people are sitting on blankets or walking around and talking to each other. It's like a scene from one of those movies where the dam bursts and everyone is evacuated to a municipal building, only instead of all their belongings the people here are carrying pillows and Cokes and Twinkies. We find a spot right in the middle of the field. Some kids are playing a game of tag. They keep running through the crowd, laughing, screaming, just barely missing the people on the ground, which of course is part of the fun. When one of the kids brushes against my mother's shoulder I can see that she wants to stop him, give him a talking to, but I ask her not to. I





"I don't see why I should worry. It seems harmless enough to me."

• •

remember when I would have been playing, too.

There is a black platform in the center of the baseball field, and after about three-quarters of an hour a presentation begins. A fireman and a policeman and a man from the Chamber of Commerce walk back and forth to the microphone and give each other awards, for safety and diligence and community service. Then they step down and a group of boys and girls collect onstage, most of them blond, all of them in robes. The man from the Chamber of Commerce, wearing his silver community-service medal, introduces them as the Royal Danish Boys and Girls Choir, "all the way from Holland." Then he leaves the stage, and though I imagine that the children will sing Danish folk songs, or maybe European anthems, what they sing is a medley of Broadway show tunes, in English, designed around the theme of a foreigner's impressions of America: "Oklahoma!" and "Getting to Know You" and "Gary, Indiana," though it is hard to make out the exact words through their accents.

By the time they have finished, the sky has turned dark blue, with the moon hanging just to one side. The policeman and the fireman return with the man from the Chamber of Commerce. "Good evening," he says. His voice echoes all over the field. "We'd like to welcome all of you to this year's celebration of the Greenwich, Connecticut, Fourth of July. In keeping with the spirit of this very special day, we'd like all of you to rise for the singing of our national anthem." My mother and I stand to sing, and there is something nice about being part of this wave of people, of voices. During the last line, there is a popping sound like a champagne bottle opening, and a yellow streak rises over the platform, nosing its way into the sky. The words "and the home, of the, brave" are lost in a chorus of "Oh"s. We sit down again, en masse. I hand my mother her sweater. I can barely see her, but her voice comes from where I know she should be: "Thank you." The fireworks go off over the outfield, sometimes one, sometimes two or three at a time. Each one leaves a little shadow of smoke that the next one, bursting, illuminates. Some bloom like flowers; others are simply midair explosions, flashes. A few burst and then shoot forward, like the effect in "Star Wars" when the ship goes into hyperspace. Some are designed to fool us: One pops open very high in the air, sending out a circle of streamers like the frame of an umbrella; the crowd begins to "Ooh." Then one of these streamers, falling, pops open itself, sending out another series, and the rest of the crowd goes "Ah." Finally, one of these pops right over our heads, giving off a final shower of color, and the crowd whistles and applauds. The display gets more and more elaborate, until, for the last few minutes, there are ten or twenty rockets in the air at once, bursting and unfolding simultaneously. Everyone starts cheering, and the noises keep booming over us, making us duck our heads. The air smells like sulfur.

IN the car, I am close to sleep. My mother is driving, outside it is dark, and I feel safe. The roads are crowded at first, but farther away from the school the traffic gets thinner, until we are driving alone down mostly empty roads. We seem to drive for a long time before joining up with the highway, where we become again simply one car among many.

"I'm working this summer," my

mother announces, after a little while.

I know, but I ask "Where?" anyway.

"Here," she says. "At the school. I got my old job back."

"Mom."

She stops me. "I thought about it, and I decided that it really was important for me to have you in school right now. It was my decision to make, and I made it."

I turn to look at her. Her face is lit up by the meters in the dashboard. It's a surprise to remember that she has a body to go with her voice. I look at her profile, at her cheek and at the skin underneath her chin beginning to sag. I remember how frightened she had been when we first moved to the city, how odd it had felt being in a house without my father's voice filling it, and how when we drove up to college for the first time last fall and she saw my name on top of my registration folder she walked out of the reception hall. I found her outside, on the main green, crying. "I can't believe we did it, we pulled it off," she said, meaning college.

"I just don't want to be a burden," I say now.

"You are," she says. "But it's O.K. I mean, I'm your mother, and you're supposed to be my burden." She turns to look at me in the dark. "I am your mother, aren't I?"

"As far as I know."

She laughs, and then we don't talk for a while. She turns on the air-conditioner. I close my eyes and lean my head against the window. Every so often we hit a bump, which makes the window jiggle, which makes my teeth click together. "I'm sorry you have to work," I say.

"Look, you should be. Don't ask me to get rid of your guilt for you. If you feel guilty, that's fine. This was just important to me, that's all."

Her using the word "guilt" frightens me. I sit up and open my eyes. "What did Dad say to you on the phone?" I ask.

"Nothing. He said he wasn't going to pay for you. He said that he was doing the right thing. He said you understood. Do you?"

"No."

She nods, driving. "That's what I told your father. He said you should call him, if you want to. Do you?"

I laugh. "No."

She nods again. "I told him that, too."

She seems ready to stop talking, but I keep going. I want her to tell me that it's O.K., that she missed working outdoors, that she missed the little kids, missed Connecticut. "I just feel bad because now you can't go to Wellfleet for the summer."

My mother says, "Let's not talk."

We drive. Through the windshield everything looks purple and slick—the road and the tail-lights of the cars passing us and the slender, long-necked lights hanging over the highway. We seem sealed in, as if we are travelling under water.

My mother reaches over and turns off the air-conditioner. "There is something I want to talk to you about, Richard," she says.

"What?" I ask.

She keeps her face turned toward the highway. "If anything like this ever happens again, I want you to tell me immediately. Don't make it so I have to find out myself. This whole thing wouldn't have happened if you had told me about it in the spring. We could have gotten loans and things. As it is, we're stuck."

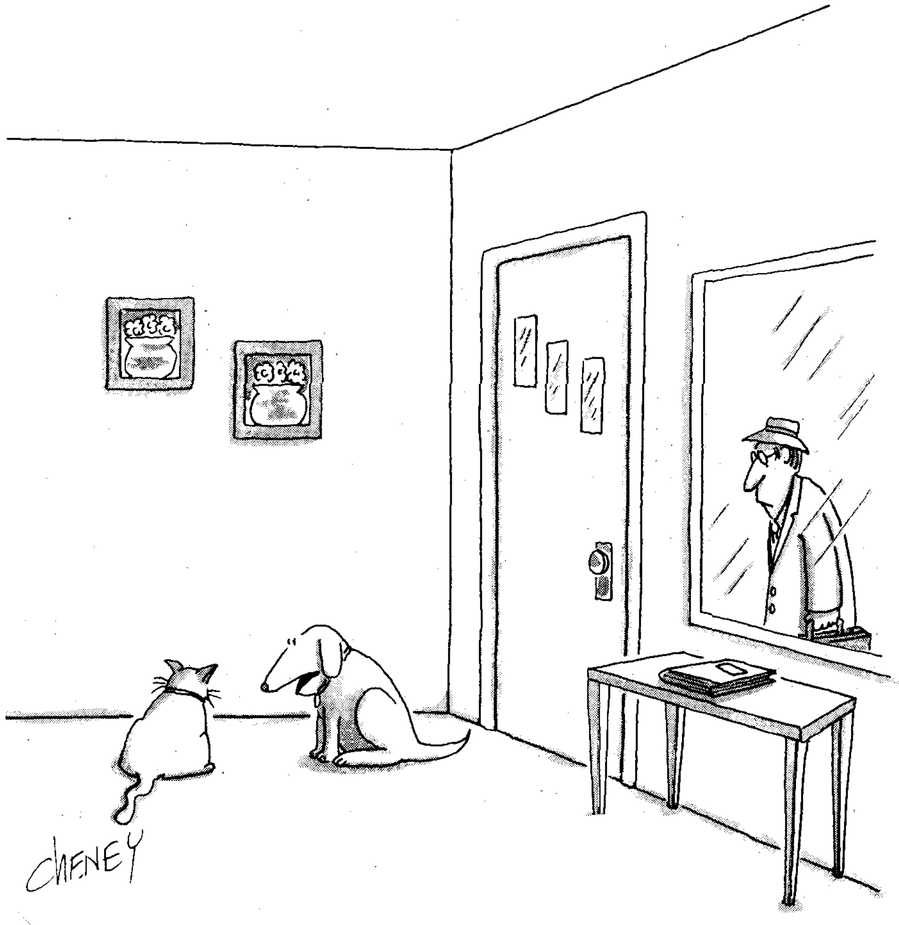
I don't say anything.

"If you ever have anything to tell me," she says, "tell me when it happens, O.K.? We're very close. You can tell me anything you want to. O.K.?"

She looks over at me. I try to keep my face from showing anything, and when I can't do that I look away, at my feet under the dashboard. It is an offer. I can tell her or not. The funny thing is, I can feel that she doesn't really want me to. If she has guessed, she doesn't want me to confirm it. And though I am relieved, it seems to me that if I don't tell her now I never will, and this thing will always be between us, this failure, my father's voice embedded in static.

I look up. We are passing under the George Washington Bridge.

"O.K.," I say. —David Lipsky



"He's my best friend and he works hard all day. Couldn't you at least wag your tail?"

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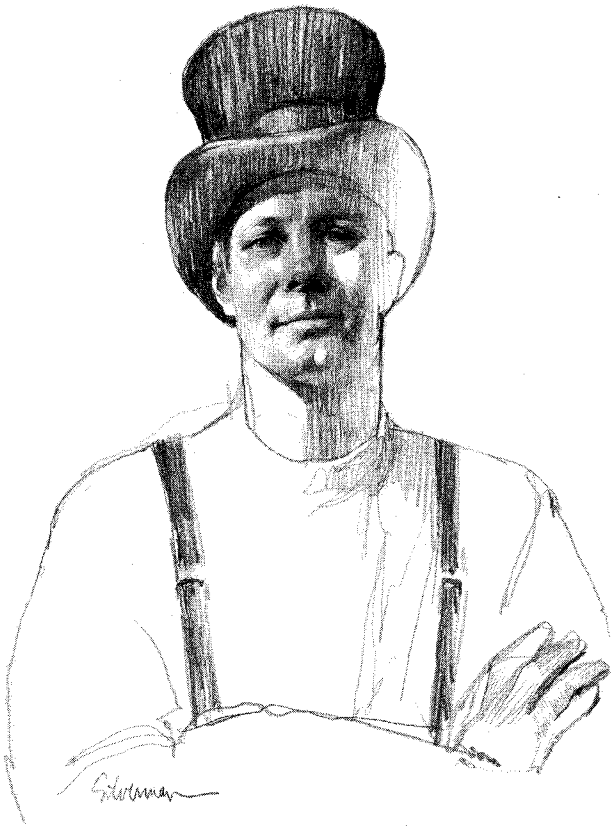
NEATEST TRICK OF THE WEEK

[*From the Santa Ana* (*Calif.*) *Register*]

Everyone was to be disappointed. Dust was so severe that some spectators left shortly before arriving.

PROFILES

CLOWN



Bill Irwin

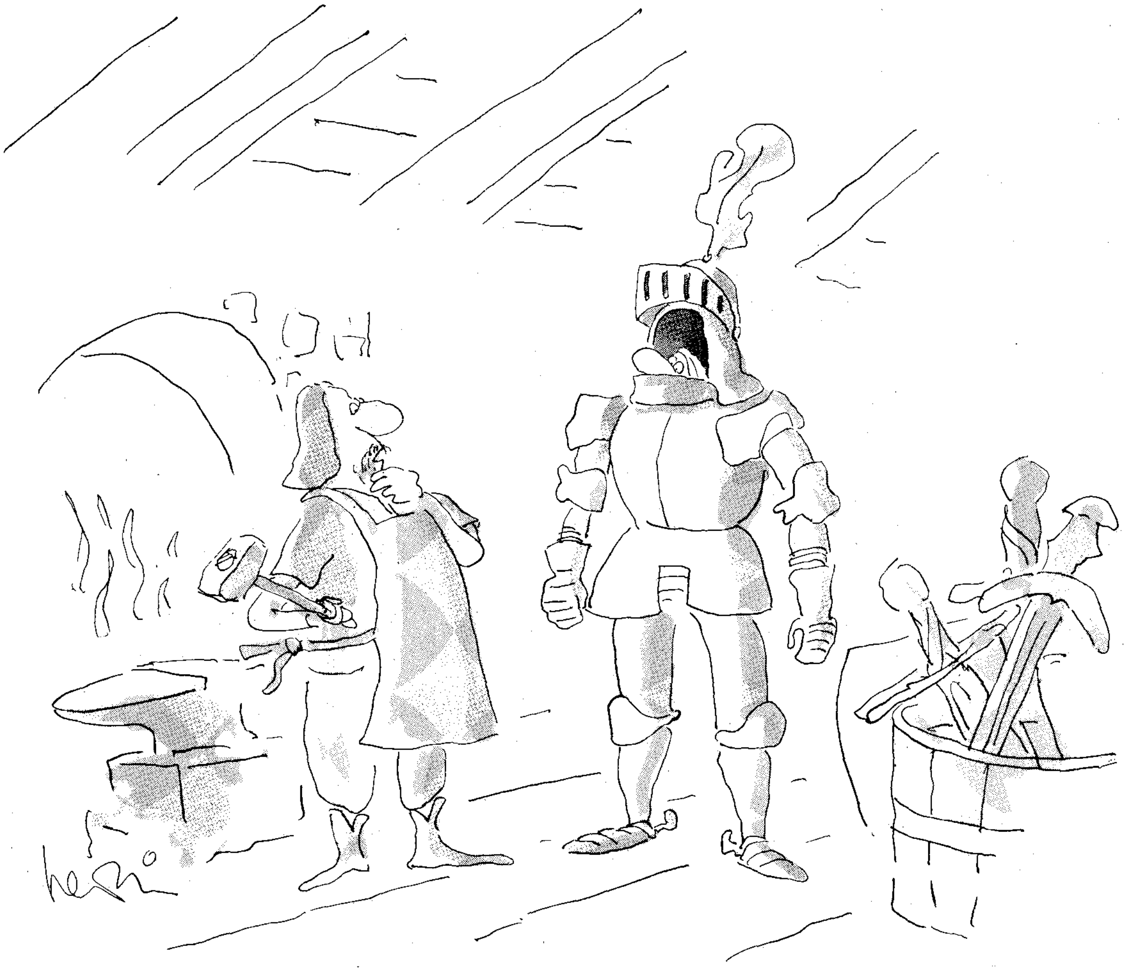
THIRTY-SIX hats are hanging on the wall of the studio apartment—top hats, derbies, fedoras, a fez, and more than a dozen almost identical gray felt hats that look like squashed cabbages. On the floor are three large theatrical trunks, a magician's stand, and a breakaway folding chair that shuts like a mousetrap when one tries to sit on it. In a closet are a military gas mask, a pair of large plastic ears (for use during Mark Antony's funeral oration), a fork that folds back on itself and flips food into one's lap, a mortarboard with a tassel that salutes, an endless string of stage spaghetti, an outsize overcoat, shoes as long as a skateboard, a red fright wig, and a scraggly rubber chicken. A stranger might well wonder who lives here. Enter Bill Irwin. Tall, blond, blue-eyed, with even features and perfect posture, he is a walking oxymoron: a leading man as clown.

Traditionally, clowns are short or spindly; they are Chaplinesque or Keatonish, tubby like Fatty Arbuckle, cadaverous, pop-eyed, bulb-nosed. When all clownliness comes together, there is Bert Lahr, who out of makeup looked as a clown should look—funny. Clowns come from underprivileged backgrounds. They grow up in the East End of London, Cockney buskers cadging pennies; they are first-generation or second-generation Americans, dialect comedians who hustled their way up vaudeville billboards. Looking at Bill Irwin, one wonders what he is doing in such company—exactly the question that for many years went through the minds of his parents. Irwin's father, Horace Irwin, is a retired aerospace engineer, and his mother, Elizabeth, is a former schoolteacher. They are a financially comfortable all-American couple with three children and a house adjoining a redwood forest, in Little River, California. A few years ago, when their friends, whose children were rising lawyers, doctors, and stockbrokers, asked them what Bill was doing, the Irwins admitted, with a touch of sheepishness, "He's a . . . clown." Now, with celebrity and a 1984 MacArthur Foundation prize attesting to his comic genius—Irwin was the first performer to win this highly remunerative award, which pays him some thirty-six thousand dollars a year for five years—his parents can say, "He's *the* clown," to distinguish him from other funnymen. The description still seems not quite professional, and even a little embarrassing. Do you put "clown" on your passport application? Depending on his mood, Irwin can call himself an actor or a performance artist or a mime or an eccentric dancer or a comic playwright who directs and performs his own work. The truth is that he is not quite sure what he does; whatever it is, he does it with a brilliance that puts him, at age thirty-five, at the head of his class.

The quintessential Irwin character, as personified in his shows "The Regard of Flight" and "The Courtroom," is a well-meaning innocent who finds himself tricked at every turn. Though he may become momentarily annoyed, he maintains a kind of seraphic poise as obstacles surround him, and he is undiscourageable in his persistence. In one of his characteristic comic moves, he walks across a stage and accidentally trips over an imaginary bump. Again and again, he trips in exactly the same spot, and gradually seems to learn his lesson. Finally, when he reaches the tripping point he leaps high and wide, doing a split in midair. On landing, he smiles as if he had cheated fate, and *then* trips over the imaginary—and apparently now migratory—bump. Whether he is tripping, being drawn feet first into the wings by an imaginary suction device, or being chased in a circle by a fellow-clown, he is unabashed by his ineptitude. At the same time, he never loses our sympathy. His basic ability—he can tap-dance, break-dance, juggle—is an additional comic fillip for the audience.

Though Irwin is often compared with both Chaplin and Keaton as a silent clown, he is actually closer in attitude to Harold Lloyd, an average man hanging on for dear life as the minute hand on a giant clock descends. Another valid comparison is with Jacques Tati—a bumbling tourist waging a constant war against apparently animate objects. Irwin's similarity to Tati extends to his elasticized body. He can win as many laughs with his long legs as with his brightly expressive features. The height of his kick seems to surprise even the kicker.

The most recent Irwin piece, "The Courtroom," is a clown show about the injudicious judicial system. The stage set looks like a Kafkaesque funeral parlor, but with witness-boxes, a monolithic bench, a faceless jury, and a farcical complement of seven doors to slam. In checked jacket, baggy pants, and horn-rims, he wanders into the courtroom in search of a place to apply for a bicycle license and finds



"Of course, it will have to be shortened."

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himself caught in the middle of a legal free-for-all. The squabbling attorneys literally juggle justice. (Each exhibit is marked by a rubber ball.) The court stenographer, called upon to read her notes, responds with a tap dance, and the clown joins her in a tap challenge match. Darting in and out of doors and disguises, Irwin becomes the judge, assuming decrepitude by sinking his neck into his chest like a tortoise retreating into its shell. Delivering testimony in a case he knows absolutely nothing about, he stands tall in the witness-box, which is equipped with an imaginary lever that raises and lowers him as if he were in a freight elevator; in the middle of the interrogation, he suddenly sinks from sight, then slowly reappears. During a recess, he enters the courtroom and is handed a case labelled "Court Records," and the contents turn out to be of the 78-r.p.m. variety. He puts one on a phonograph, and, responding to the jaunty tune, his feet move involuntarily and his body seems electrified, transporting him into a frenetic dance. In this fashion, he is often overcome—and swept away—by events beyond his control.

Such stage pieces as "The Regard of Flight" and "The Courtroom," created, directed, and performed by Irwin with a company of clowns, are nonpareil examples of what is variously referred to as the New Vaudeville, Clown Art, and New Wave Comedy—a presentational style of performing which is as new as the theatrical avant-garde and as old as vaudeville itself. In the past fifteen years, there has been a proliferation of new, young variety artists. Many of the New Vaudevillians originated in San Francisco, but the wave has become national. It also cuts across artistic disciplines, allying itself with modern dance and music and with experimental theatre, and often involving video techniques and the martial arts. Among the outstanding performers are Avner Eisenberg, a sweet-tempered silent clown who calls himself Avner the Eccentric; the Flying Karamazov Brothers, five far-flinging, linguistically limber juggling madmen; Penn & Teller, aggressively iconoclastic magicians; Bruce D. Schwartz, who wears a puppet stage around his body; and the Foolsfire trio, consisting of the clowns Bob Berky and Fred Garbo and the balletic juggler Michael Moschen, who has made a performance art of juggling a single crystal ball. There are also standup monologuists, such as Whoopi Goldberg, whose imagination is populated by bizarre characters drawn from life and fantasy. And there are ventriloquists, roller skaters, whistlers, one-man bands, and a man who specializes in blowing large, sculptural soap bubbles. Thirty years ago, such performers might have competed for a place on "Ted Mack and the Original Amateur Hour" or "The Ed Sullivan Show." Now they are in the pantheon of post-modernist performance artists. One basic difference is that each is his own invention: the actor as performance-art object.

In searching for the roots of the New Vaudeville, one looks back to the nineteen-sixties, when young people disengaged themselves from societal expectations and took up farming, handicrafts, and other cottage industries. The New Vaudeville could be considered a return to self-reliance—the spinning and weaving of the performing arts, the individual's alternative art. The Flying Karamazovs, who are armchair philosophers on the subject, regard juggling as the ultimate auto-art. They pinpoint the date when New Vaudeville was born as June 7, 1968. The date is obviously arbitrary, but it is as apt as any other; in the late nineteen-sixties and early seventies, streets and campuses were filled with jugglers, mimes, guitarists, and flutists. "The streets were just full of people in whiteface—and I was one of them," Irwin says. Two planks represented an excess of scenery, as performers realized that they could

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work on a sidewalk or a patch of grass. An act could travel from street corner to street corner or city to city. There were, of course, precedents for this spontaneous, often counterculture behavior, including, in America, two politically responsive touring companies, the San Francisco Mime Troupe and the Bread and Puppet Theatre. One could also trace progenitors back to commedia dell'arte.

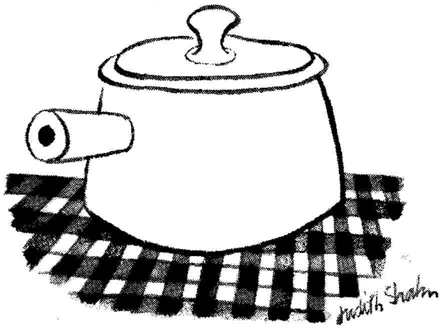
The New Vaudevillians come from diverse backgrounds. In common, they are college-educated and eclectically trained, but each has a specialized talent—one that has sometimes limited the performer's broad popular appeal. The Karamazovs are jugglers first, clowns second, actors third, and they practiced all three professions simultaneously in a production of "The Comedy of Errors" at the Goodman Theatre in Chicago, early in 1983. As a clown, mime, and eccentric dancer, Irwin does not fit comfortably into any category. His biggest problem has been crossing over from individual clowning into a more structured performance situation. He has auditioned for roles in Broadway musicals and plays and been approached about acting in television situation comedies and Hollywood movies, but producers are often at a loss to identify his talent. The fact is that he is sui generis, and is funniest when he is doing his own number. Though he remains outside the mainstream, he has made clowning fashionable.

WHEN Bill Irwin was seven months old, he stood up in his crib, surveyed the world around him, and bounced over the railing onto the floor. This was his first attempt at flying. A few months earlier, he had balanced himself, standing, on the palm of his father's hand. In the Irwin family album, there is a photograph recording that event. Deadpan, wearing droopy diapers, little Bill looks like a baggy-pants vaudeville version of the New Year. No one had any suspicion then that he would make a career out of acting foolish. Actually, he had a rather normal, middle-class upbringing, but with a novel variation on the familiar theme. Every member of his family—father, mother, younger brother and sister, even several of his grandparents—was, to some degree, stagestruck.

Horace Irwin, in his student days, had wanted to be a scenic artist. In order to pay off college debts, he had gone to work in the aviation industry, and when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor he was frozen in his job. Eventually, he moved from draftsman to engineer, and he remained in the industry for thirty years. After his retirement, he joined a community theatre as a stage designer and actor. Bill's maternal grandfather, Denny Mills, was a schoolteacher and would-be theatrical director. He staged plays and pageants in his native South Dakota, sometimes including his children in the cast. Denny Mills spotted his grandson's restless energy at an early age. He said that holding Bill was "like holding a wagon wheel."

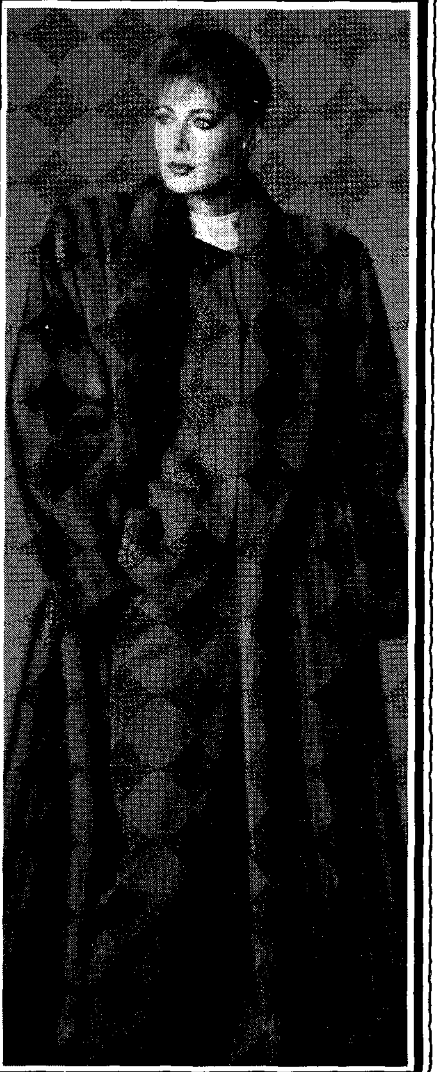
Bill, born on April 11, 1950, was named William after his father's favorite uncle, Will A. Cole; he has always been called Bill. His brother, Patrick, two years younger, was called Pat as a child. His sister, five years younger, was named Nan, not Nancy. Their mother, Elizabeth, has always been known as Liz. Liz, Bill, Pat, Nan—where does that leave Horace? He always hated his name. Within the family, he is known as Ace. A neighbor, skilled at woodworking, once made Mr. and Mrs. Irwin a breadboard as a gift and inscribed their names on it, but there was room for only three letters on each side. The neighbor put "Liz" on one side and "Ace" (rather than "Hor") on the other. Ever since, Horace's children and their friends, including the members of the Pickle Family Circus, where Irwin did much of his early clowning, have affectionately called him Ace.

As an earthbound aeronautical engineer, Ace Irwin had recurrent dreams of flying. He dreamed that he could put his arms out and levitate, flying up and down the interior of the aircraft factory where he worked. His dream became a family joke. He would come down to breakfast, and one of the children would say, "Hey, Ace, did you do any soaring last night?" Bill has similar dreams, and he has been able to make artistic use of them. His comedy is filled with flying imagery, beginning with the title of his best-known show, "The Regard of Flight." In that show, he challenged gravity, in two senses of the word, by the use of mechanical devices—strings and pulleys and "lean shoes." Lean shoes are shoes so heavily weighted that the wearer can tilt far forward without toppling. One gives the impression of skiing downhill while one is standing stock-still.



Because of Ace Irwin's profession, the family moved frequently, following a nomadic path around the American West from California to Oklahoma and back to California. This led to a certain unsettled feeling on the part of Bill and his brother and sister. They learned that nothing lasted very long—not schools or friendships or participation in team sports. They were forced to become adaptable. Moving so often made Bill wary. "One of the lessons I learned was to wait, whether I was moving to a new city or walking into a party," he said not long ago. "Trying to be assertive too soon was almost always going to work against me. I have the same set of instincts in performing. First, I get the lay of the land."

Whenever the Irwins moved, it was to a homogeneous community. Even though the children made fun of accepted values, they participated in all popular activities; and they looked like California beach kids. Bill's primary cultural influences, like those of his peers, were from television. In the company of his sister, he spent hours watching situation comedies, variety hours, and adventure programs, and they reënacted favorites for each other's amusement. The hit in the Irwin home was "The Ned Bullivan Show"—a spoof of "The Ed Sullivan Show," with Bill playing the host and most of the guests. He and his sister were a comedy team. Nan would play a character named George Hingy, pronounced "Henjy," and Bill would be the interviewer. No matter how he pronounced the character's name, she would correct him. He would apologize and say it his way again. She would argue. Like Abbott and Costello, the two would go on endlessly. "She was great at keeping the invention alive," Bill has said. "All I had to do was to play the straight man. Nan's main ingredient was indignation." Their brother, Pat, also had a cast of characters. "If someone looked in on our family at that time, he might have assumed that my brother or my sister would end up as an entertainer," Bill



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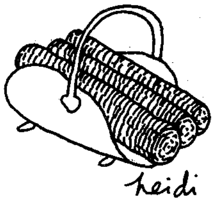
says. "In many ways, I was not the most talented of the three. But I was the most forthright about *needing* to become a performer, and, therefore, to become a professional."

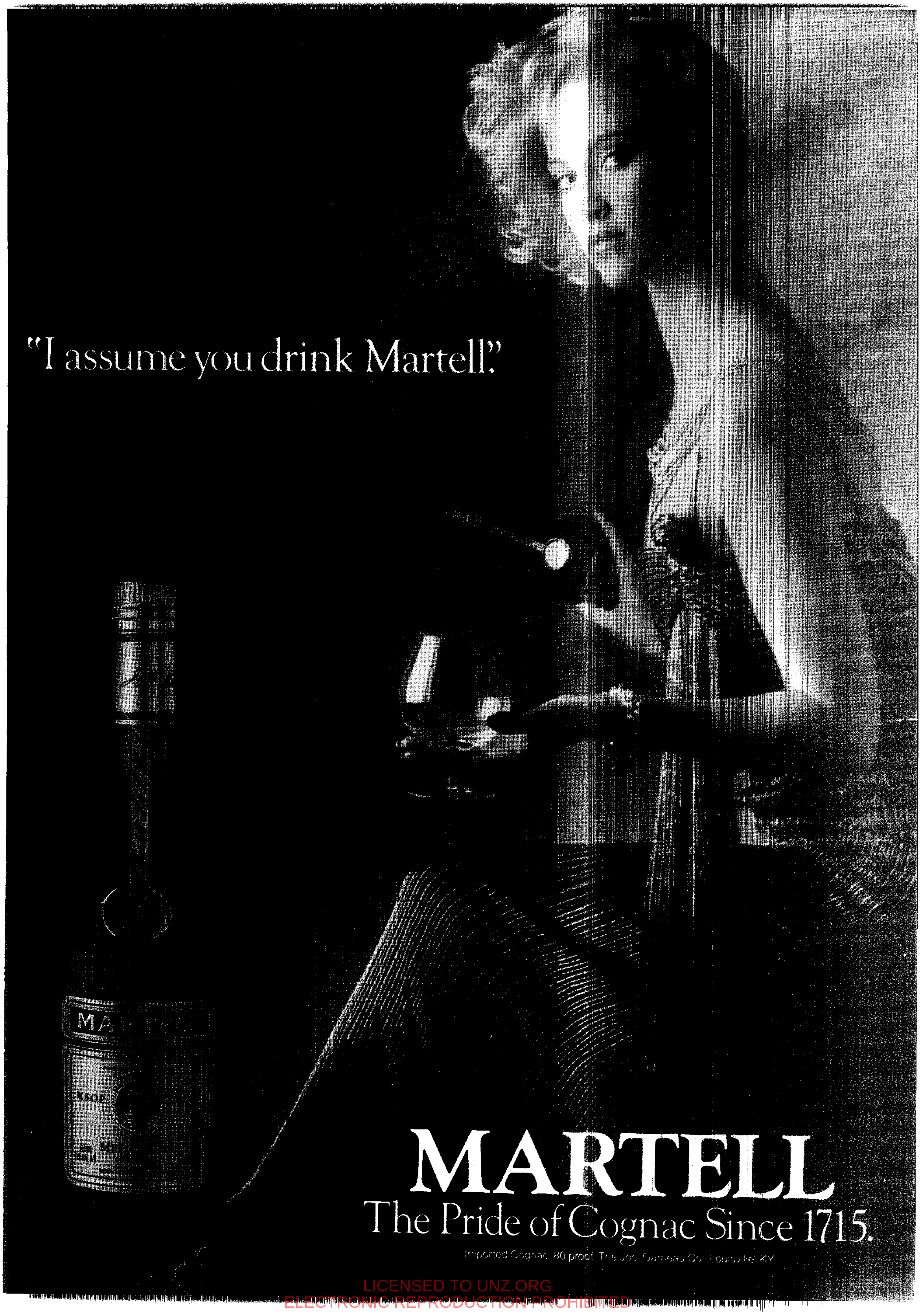
At George Ellery Hale Junior High School, in Woodland Hills, California, Bill began to blossom as a public performer, playing the Elvis Presley role in the musical "Bye Bye Birdie." As part of the school's theatre program, the teachers would often act, and in any faculty show the principal, Jotty Falvo, would invariably make an appearance walking on his hands. With a hand-walking principal as a model, perhaps it was inevitable that Bill would go into clowning. From an early age, he indulged in role-playing. As a child, he would dress in his cowboy suit and sing "Bury Me Not on the Lone Prairie," hoping someone would hear him and think he was "a cowboy kid." When he got his first football uniform, he wore it—helmet, shoulder pads, and all—to breakfast, lunch, and dinner. In California, in the family's back-yard pool, he would pretend that he was wrestling alligators. Disobeying his mother's order, he would hitchhike to the beach—and improvise a persona, pretending to be someone else for the duration of the ride. One of his girlfriends knew him only as Bill O'Reilly. That was during his return-to-Irish phase. With another girlfriend, who knew his name, he said he was born in a town called Rubydoo, Arkansas, and he signed her yearbook "The Rubydoo Kid." As usual, he was caught in his fabrication. One day, the girl asked Bill's sister what life had been like in Rubydoo.



Because of Bill's easily stimulated imagination, there were moments when his mother began to wonder if he would grow up to be "a congenital liar." Even then, however, she realized that he "loved to entertain people—by whatever method." And, as liberal parents, the Irwins learned to indulge the individualism of their children. "I think my mother would have been worried if we hadn't been disaffected youth," Bill says. He did, of course, have his sober side. His sister speaks of browsing through old family photographs. "I noticed that, as a little boy, Bill was always aware of the camera," she says. "He was very serious, and not very happy-looking. He looked tense." One other aspect of her brother had a particular interest for Nan. She calls it his "Rollo" look, and says, "It's a look Bill gets on his face when he is being charming and a tad phony." When Bill was asked to explain "Rollo," he seemed surprised, as if a family secret had been uncovered. He laughed in mock anger at his sister, and said, "It's a certain kind of smarmy smile." He demonstrated by smiling out of one side of his mouth. It is an attitude that he still strikes in interviews, he said, or whenever he feels uncomfortable and wants to cover up his nervousness by ingratiating himself. "It's an artist's worst enemy—to need to be liked."

Often, in league with his brother and sister, he managed to set himself apart from his schoolmates. Nan recalls, "We were fairly preoccupied with being cool." Nevertheless, the Irwins always made a good impression. "We were prized as precocious kids—partly because we were all well mannered," Bill says. "Schoolteachers confuse kids who are well behaved with kids who are smart." As one final disruption in his nomadic childhood, he spent his senior year of high school in Belfast, Northern Ireland, in an American Field Service exchange program. It was a bleak year, brightened by the opportunities for travel and by the fact that he played the role of an Englishman in a school play.

Returning to America, he decided to apply for a job at Disneyland in the summer of 1968. The interviewer told him that in order to be eligible for employment he would have to cut his hair. In what he considers a rare artistic compromise, he immediately got a haircut and returned to the Disneyland office. He was hired as a ride operator, wearing a different costume every day in Frontierland. His dream was to dress up in a Mickey Mouse costume and welcome visitors to the park. Because his work hours were cut short, he quit after four days. Though he left Disneyland in a pique, he soon had a more extensive relationship with the Disney interests. In the fall, he enrolled at U.C.L.A., signing up for the standard theatrical curriculum, with the general idea of becoming an actor. After two years, disappointed in the conservative training and wanting to take part in something more "culturally volatile," he transferred to the California Institute of the Arts, the experimental arts institution that had been founded by Walt Disney. It was a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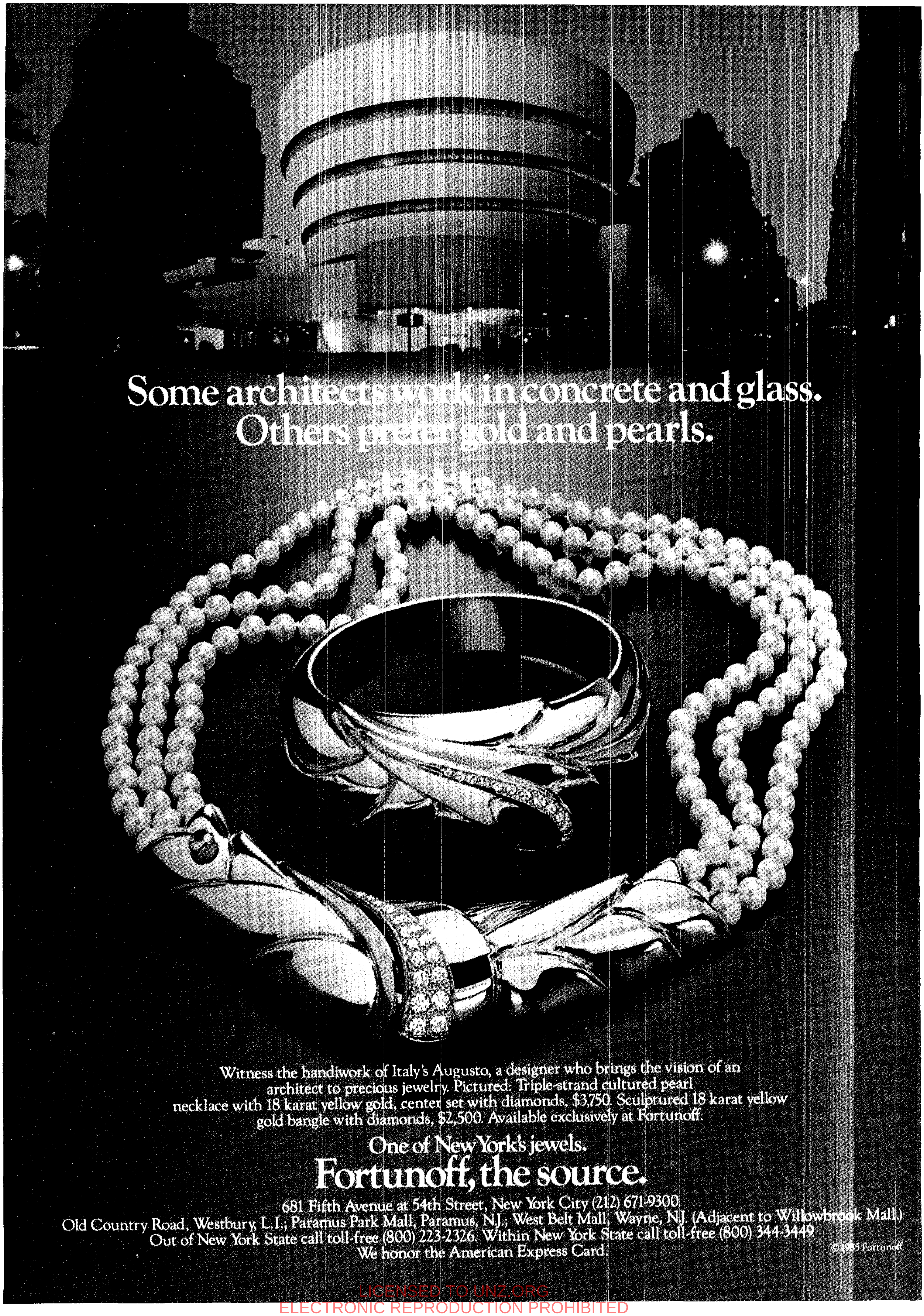
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curious alliance—Disney, a symbol of traditionalism, and a college emphasizing progressivism in the arts. To deepen the element of paradox, the dean of the theatre school was Herbert Blau, the controversial director who had recently resigned as co-director of the Repertory Theater of Lincoln Center. The Blau-Disney merger did not last long, but Blau had a lingering effect on Bill and other incipient theatrical artists.

Michael O'Connor, a classmate of Irwin's at CalArts and later a clown collaborator with him, offers his first impression of his colleague: "Bill was Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer. He looked like a surfer. He had long blond hair, and he was in his white period—he wore nothing but white. Bill was an immensely likable guy, with a kind of ordinariness about him that is part of his appeal as a performer." Though Irwin, O'Connor, and another classmate did a circus act for a children's party, it was not clear at this point that clowning would be Bill's future preoccupation. Between classes, he performed mime on the streets, and sometimes he would go to San Francisco to take part in Renaissance fairs—open-air carnivals in which people put on elaborate period costumes and engaged in mock-medieval activities. At one of the fairs, Bill met a young performer who billed himself as the Reverend Chumleigh. Because he was more experienced, he became Bill's mentor, teaching him such tricks as how to break a brick on one's stomach and how to eat fire. As a fire-eater, Bill called himself Carno the Magnificent Salamander. Passingly remunerative, the Renaissance fairs represented what Irwin calls "a countercultural life mixed in with the notion of a gypsy encampment." For him, they were the closest he came to "the romantic days of vagabondery."

Learning while he performed, Irwin polished comic routines and adapted to audiences whose attention span was, at best, brief. One day, he was clowning on the street outside a bar in San Francisco. Because the patrons inside seemed to be enjoying his act, he decided to go in and pass the hat. To his surprise, a waiter bounced him back into the street. Dusting himself off and trying to recover his dignity, he made a mental note: If possible, get your payment up front. He began to create characters, one of them a preacher of his own, the Reverend Nelson, whose long-winded sermons were peppered with malapropisms. The Reverend Nelson was so popular at fairs that Irwin decided to try him out on the street. To his dismay, no one listened. Another lesson: At fairs, ticket holders filed past him, but on the street people were rushing to get somewhere. They would, however, stop for juggling, fire-eating, or sword swallowing. As his act improved, the take became heavier. "I much preferred passing a hat to leaving it on the ground," he says. "That differentiates performing from begging. I tried to keep the rap going with the audience while passing the hat. The technique of hitting a crowd for money is called bottling." Bottling led to one weighty problem: the payment was in spare change. When he flew back to college, in Los Angeles, he paid for his ticket from a big bag of nickels and dimes. Street performing made him extremely sympathetic to others practicing it. Since then, he has always put money in another man's hat, and has also been very generous in performing for benefits.

At CalArts, Irwin studied t'ai chi, mime, dance, gymnastics, and abstract vocal techniques, and he acted in the play "Escurial," by Michel de Ghelderode, directed by a fellow-student (and future playwright), Albert Innaurato. To a great extent, the students were hypnotized by the sound of Blau talking. A passionate theatrical polemicist, he was known for his intellectual approach to theatre but was trying to move into more visceral areas. Because of his—by Disney standards—anarchic and radical experiments, it was inevitable that he and his employers would collide. Resigning from CalArts in the summer of 1971, Blau moved to Oberlin and took with him a nucleus of his students, including Bill Irwin and Michael O'Connor and Sharon Ott (later artistic director of the Berkeley Repertory Theatre). Even with Oberlin's venturesome history in the arts, Blau and his acolytes were controversial on campus. "Everything we did had a physical basis to it," O'Connor recalls. "We used language, but the training was rigorously physical, seven hours a day. It was very serious, sacramental work. We were asked to do these strange things that make you very vulnerable. The basis of the technique was something called impulse work. This meant suddenly moving your body at the highest rate of speed, and following any kind of impulse. That premise could lead to

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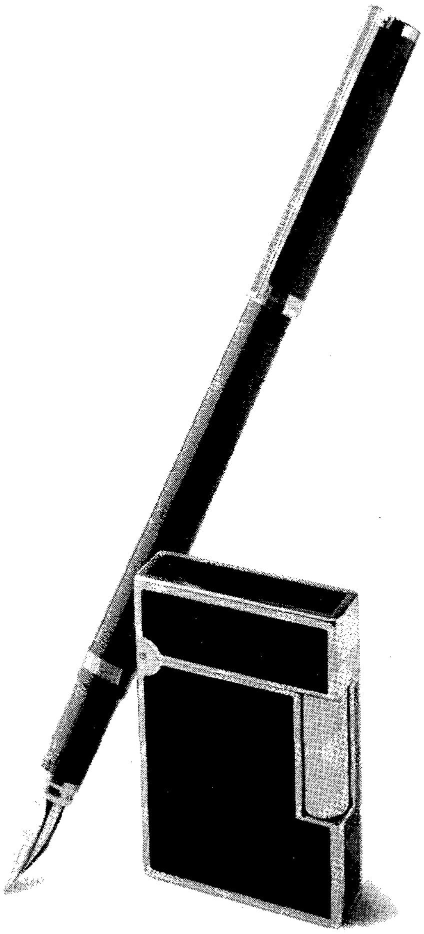

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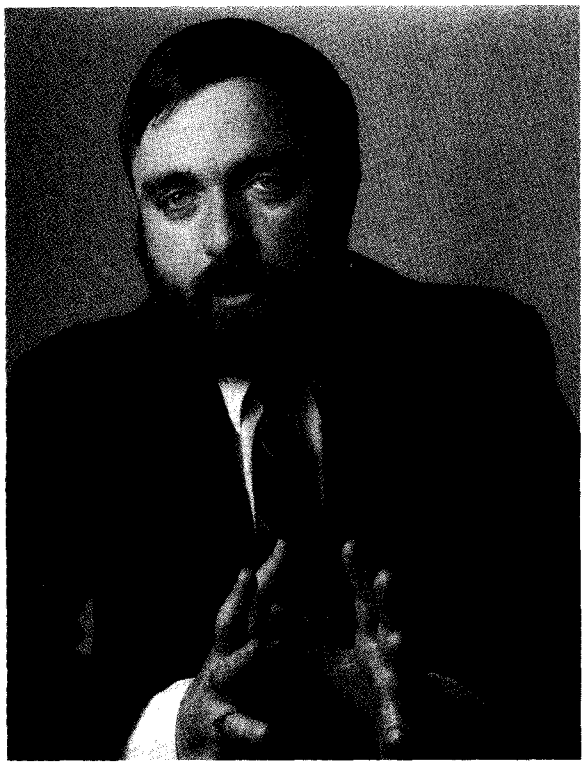

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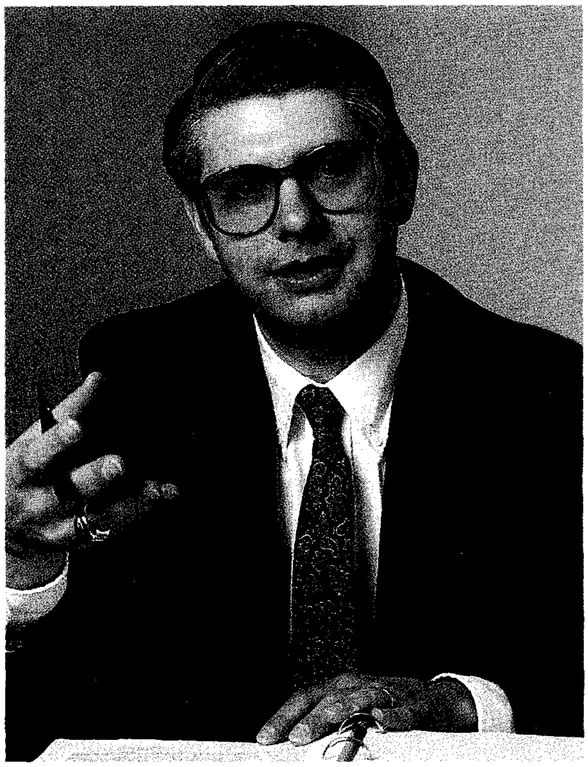

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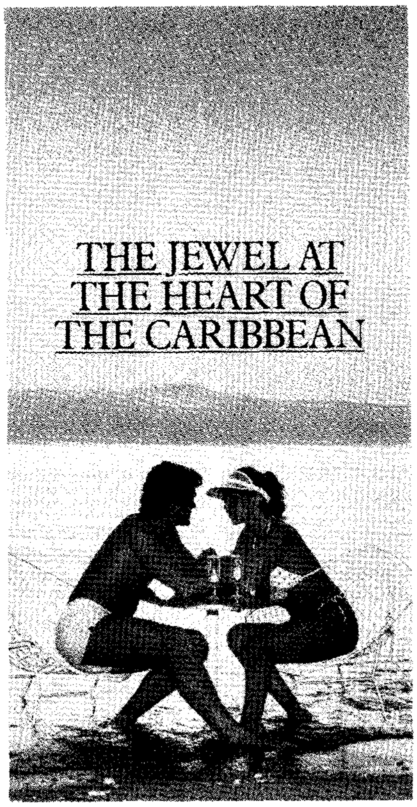
agonizing things. They were not particularly pleasant to look at or, in some cases, to experience. The first piece to come out of that technique at Oberlin was called 'Seeds of Atreus,' a version of the Oresteia, in which Bill played Orestes. He leaned on a lot of tortured animal imagery, a kind of signature thing he used to do—birdlike, beating his chest. It was a strange and powerful kind of image."

For several months, everything happened behind closed doors. A sign on the door to Blau's studio read "Performance Lab in Session. Do Not Disturb." Other Oberlin students treated Blau and his theatre ensemble—known as Kraken, after a Nordic sea monster—as visitors from outer space. Kimi Okada, a founding member of the Oberlin Dance Collective, who later became Mrs. Bill Irwin, recalls, "Through the walls we could hear screams and other horribly agonized sounds." When the troupe finally emerged into the Ohio sunshine, it presented the abstract Oresteia and "The Donner Party, Its Crossing," an exploration of a cannibalistic chapter in American history. Again, Irwin played a leading role. In August of 1974, Kraken came to New York and staged "The Donner Party" at the Performing Garage, on Wooster Street; reviewers were either baffled or bored. Doug Skinner, an Oberlin student and a member of the Dance Collective, who wrote music for the play, recalls, "It was a piece developed in isolation. When it got out, it would have been unintelligible to anybody who hadn't watched the rehearsals for a year." Though Irwin kept his sense of humor about Blau and his intellectualization, his ruminations on "refracting reflections," he came to regard him as one of the most significant influences on his life. As for Blau, while he gives Irwin full marks for clowning—for what he characteristically calls Irwin's "parodistic spontaneity"—he thinks that it is only one of his many talents, and that he is capable of acting of a "more powerful" nature. At Oberlin, Irwin continued to develop the comic side of his performing personality, playing the lead in a Plautus comedy and teaching classes in physical comedy. For him and other members of the ensemble, the experience with Blau was emotionally and physically exhausting, and after it ended they underwent a de-Blauing process. Following a respite, they turned from ensemble performance to other, sometimes non-theatrical pursuits. Julie Taymor worked as a director and designer. David Suehsdorf became a professional actor and playwright. Michael O'Connor left the theatre for three years; he studied t'ai chi and eventually joined Irwin as a clown collaborator. As for Irwin, he ran away and joined the circus.

At twenty-four, having studied theatre at U.C.L.A., CalArts, and Oberlin, and having participated in Blau's intensely eschatological experiments, Irwin decided to go to Clown College at the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey winter quarters, in Venice, Florida. It was more a Janus double face than a simple change of pace. With the same intensity he had demonstrated in his study of experimental theatre techniques, he studied trampoline, juggling, acrobatics, and elephant riding. He can do all of them. He is not a man without alternative occupations, although in subsequent years, without easy access to elephants, at least that one talent has become rusty. One apparently tangential aspect of his Ringling training had a long-range effect. In the evenings, the student clowns were called together to see movie comedies, as a background for their profession and also to keep them out of trouble in Venice. It was, Irwin says, "like being in boot camp." They saw an endless festival of movies: Keaton, Chaplin, Burns and Allen, W. C. Fields juggling—Irwin's first total immersion in the work of old masters. Another area of particular interest to him was acrobatics. Briefly, he studied with Victor Gaona, the patriarch of the famous Flying Gaona aerial act. "He put me through my first back somersault on the trampoline," Irwin says. "Then, the last week of Clown College, we did some performing, to separate those who can jump high on the trampoline from those who can't. I was wearing a black coat, a black hat, and a red wig. At a dress rehearsal, Victor Gaona turned to his family—it was huge, a bank of Gaonas, husbands and wives, children and grandchildren. He pointed at me and said, '*Número Uno Cabrón.*' Number One Guy. That was very flattering. I thought he hadn't noticed me before." Gaona asked Irwin if he would like to join one of his troupes in Venezuela as an aerialist, but Irwin turned him down. Furthermore, in November of 1974, he decided not to join Ringling Brothers after graduating from Clown College but to work on his own as a



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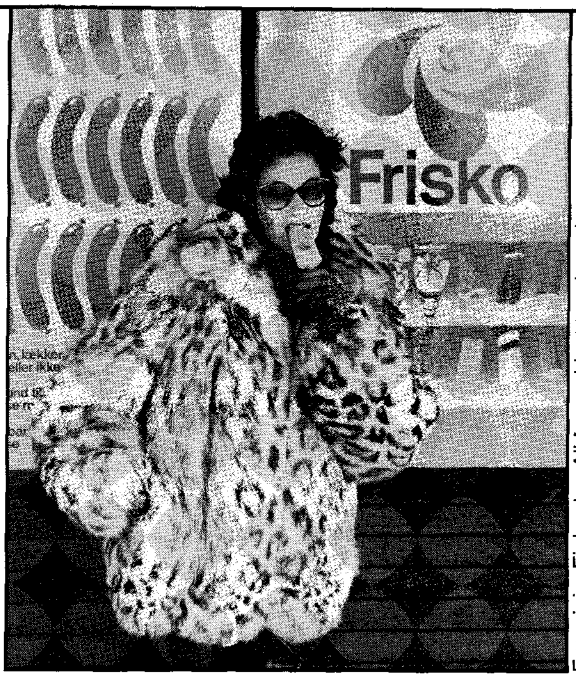

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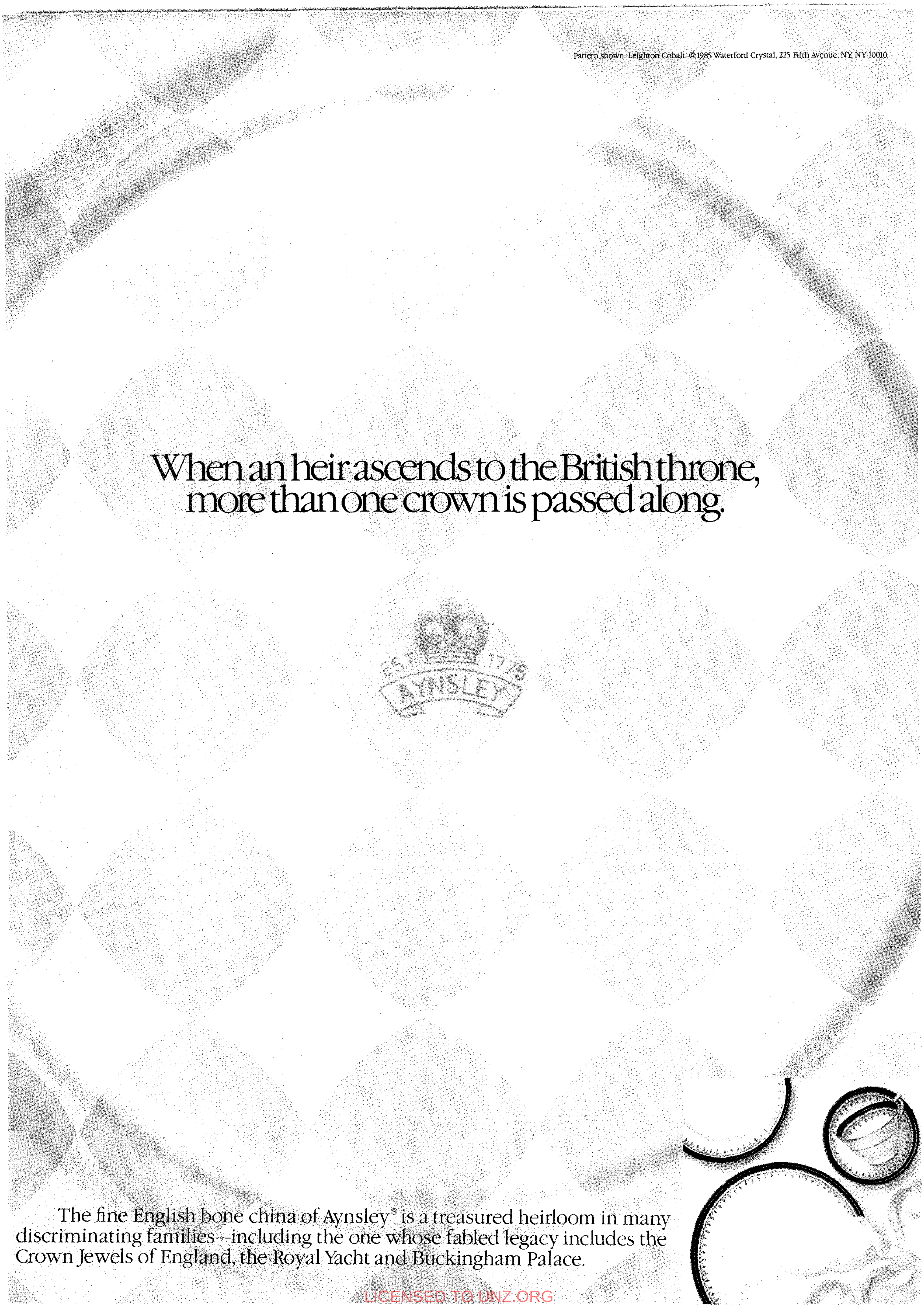
clown. That was a bit like coming out of West Point, resigning one's commission, and trying to be a free-lance Army officer.

Outside the big top, opportunities were limited for clowns, unless Irwin wanted to specialize in children's birthday parties and the opening of toy stores. He moved to San Francisco, where as a student he had passed the hat while clowning on the street, and he began scanning want ads. There were none for clowns, but one day there was the notice "Wanted: Jugglers, Tumblers, Equilibrists." The ad had been placed by Larry Pisoni, who, along with Peggy Snider, was forming the small, one-ring Pickle Family Circus. Irwin did not feel qualified as an equilibrist, and he was in no hurry to brush up his juggling, but he thought that any circus might have an opening for one more clown. Answering the ad, he met Pisoni, and the two had an immediate rapport. Short of equilibrists and deluged by clowns, Pisoni decided to make an exception in the case of Bill Irwin.

"We didn't really have any model for our circus," Pisoni says. "But one thing I wanted to do was to take traditional routines and build on them, as opposed to duplicating something we had seen. For example, we had a standard circus-clown situation: A chef is cooking and a waiter is serving. The waiter picks someone in the audience as the customer, and the standard payoff is the pie in the face as dessert. But we took the scene apart in terms of the characters. This is how the chef works. The waiter is not stupid; he makes mistakes. Whatever comes between the chef, who is authoritarian, and the waiter—the falls and the blows—has to be an accident, not an act of malice. Bill was the waiter, I was the chef, and when Geoff Hoyle"—a young English clown—"joined the company he became the chef. We would find the ending first and then improvise to that point, plugging in pieces along the way—handshaking business, hat moves, not just tricks but things that had a reason to be in the routine. We would have pictures in our minds; it was like doodling. Bill would look at a piece as a dance. It had to be fluid; it had to move. A lot of dancers don't tell a story. With Bill, there was as much character in his performance as there was dance. He played the put-upon character, and we got to the point where we could set each other up. We knew what would make my character frustrated and an-

Pattern shown: Leighton Cobalt. © 1985 Waterford Crystal, 225 Fifth Avenue, NY, NY 10010.



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gry, and I knew what it would do if I set a series of obstacles in his way. Bill, Geoff, and I did a routine as three musicians. Geoff would play a trombone, I would play a pocket cornet, and Bill would play the bass drum and cymbals. When it was time for his solo, either he would be carried away or he would forget to play."

Irwin appeared in clown white and costume. Hiding behind a clown mask made it easier for him to cavort; one could draw a parallel to those times as a youngster when he pretended to be someone else. His "signature" character was a fool with a spiked shock of red hair and a bulbous red nose. Pisoni suggested the name Willy the Clown, and Willy soon became a star of the Pickle Family Circus. "He was a very appealing character," Miss Okada says. "Willy tried to be so classy but was so inept—and agonizingly shy. Everyone fell in love with Willy."

Among other Willy fans were the Flying Karamazov Brothers. One Karamazov, Randy Nelson, recalls, "One thing we discovered was that Bill was an excellent ensemble clown—and ensemble clowning is almost a contradiction in terms." Another Karamazov, Howard Jay Patterson, says, "The first time I saw Bill, everything was there. There were no extra gestures. Every move was completely controlled yet completely spontaneous."

Even as Willy—and the Pickle Family as a whole—grew in popularity, Willy's creator retained his anonymity. Other clowns would be immediately recognized away from the circus, but hardly anyone knew who was behind the Willy makeup. For a time, Irwin taught and performed in city schools under the auspices of the San Francisco Arts Commission. "One of the other 'public artists' was this rotund amateur magician, a very odd-looking man, with close-cropped hair," Irwin recalls. "He was big and fat and did card tricks. I overheard someone saying, 'That's Willy the Clown without his makeup.' "

Though friends could find aspects of Ace Irwin in Willy the Clown, the character was drawn to Bill Irwin's own proportions. "Willy and all the other characters he plays are close to him," Miss Okada says. "He recognizes weaknesses in himself and in others, and exaggerates them so that they become funny. That makes him appealing and accessible. People recognize themselves. But Bill doesn't know where he belongs—whether he

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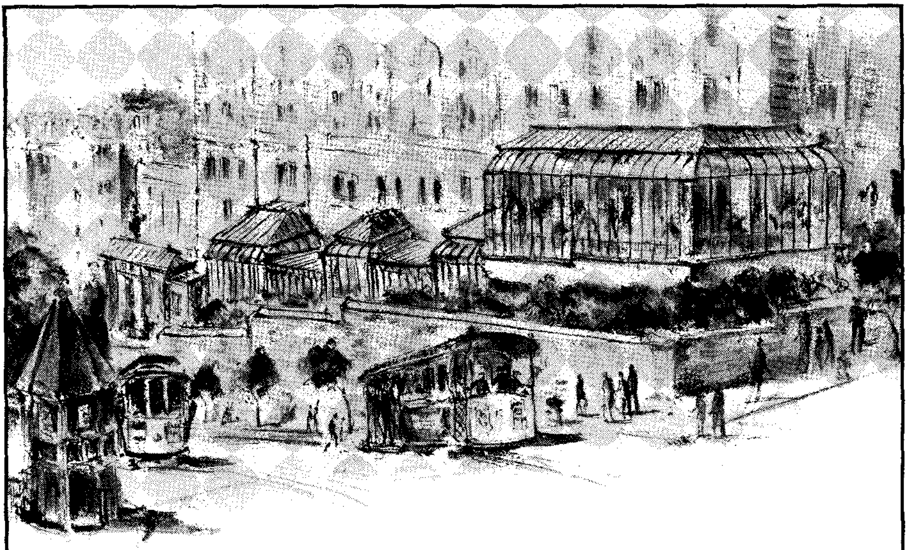
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is a dancer, a physical clown, a comedian, an actor. He has trouble trying to fit himself in. In that sense, his work is very autobiographical—about him and his foibles. A lot of his pieces are about the nightmare of being a performer."

In addition to Willy, Irwin played Hauptman von Clown, a bumbling animal trainer. His "animal" was a gorilla named Ramona Lamona, portrayed by the petite Miss Okada—the only ballet-trained, tap-dancing gorilla in the theatre. (Earlier in their collaboration, the two also did an act in which she lay suspended between two chairs and with a sledgehammer he broke a brick on her stomach.) Sharing a costume, Irwin and Larry Pisoni played a lummox—Irwin the lum, Pisoni the ox. For a brief time, for the money (seventy-five dollars an engagement), Irwin resumed his career as a fire-eater. One night, performing at a private party, he accidentally dripped lighter fluid on his chin, and his face was momentarily ignited. He was left with a bad burn and a fear of fire-eating.

After four years together, Irwin and Miss Okada were married, and the wedding was a festive performance-art event. The scene was the Irwin home in California. The Pickle Family Circus gave away the bridegroom, the Oberlin Dance Collective gave away the bride, and each "family" entertained on a stage constructed by Ace Irwin. The couple marched to the stage through a gantlet of juggling Indian clubs, and Bill sat down, a king on a throne, next to a life-size replica of his alter ego, Willy the Clown. The best man was Michael O'Connor in clown costume. A week before the wedding, Bill—accident-prone in performance—had broken his ankle while jumping on a springboard, so the couple were unable to dance at their wedding. Everything else came off as planned, including a release of helium balloons. As the wedding is described by its principals and their guests, it sounds like an enchanted occasion—it was memorable even for those who were not there—and it was difficult to follow with anything as mundane as a marriage. The marriage lasted only six years—for various reasons, beginning with the fact that their individual careers often kept them apart.

Looking back, Miss Okada says that one of her more vivid memories of her life with Irwin is of seeing him standing in front of the bathroom mirror in the morning making faces—experimenting with expressions, as if trying to decide what was to be the mask of the day. "He was also preoccupied with props," she says. "He would spend hours trying to figure out how to make a wine bottle fall over on a tray, or he would come home with plastic noses and ears. He is a notorious pack rat. Every day, he would go to thrift stores and come back with huge objects—toys such as giant golf clubs and hammers." When he was with the Pickle Family, he had the reputation of having the heaviest and largest props. Miss Okada considers all that excess clown baggage, to a certain extent, an inheritance. As an amateur carpenter, Ace Irwin is often encumbered by his tool kit and unwieldy pieces of lumber.

IN 1977, while Irwin was still clowning with the Pickle Family, he was invited to perform comedy sketches with the Oberlin Dance Collective. Together with Michael O'Connor and Doug Skinner, he created two brief sketches, presented on separate evenings. In both cases, the basic situation was that of a clown trying to get on with what he was doing, and suffering from the interference of others. "Circa," lasting five minutes, called for O'Connor to chase Irwin in a circle—a routine that O'Connor refers to as "running for Godot." In the other scene, Skinner sat at the piano and repeatedly interrupted Irwin's performance. In one other regard, the appearances were eventful: Bill performed without Willy the Clown makeup, although not quite as himself. He wore a gray felt hat and oversized clothes (the horn-rims came later). It was for him a crucial step away from the traditional clown white—an assertion of his own developing comic personality. For the sketches, he took the structural ideas of postmodern theatre and poked fun at them. "It was very much patterned after—and spoofing—performance-art pieces that were popular," Irwin says. "Robert Wilson had been through San Francisco with a piece called, 'I Was Sitting on My Patio This Guy Appeared I Thought I Was Hallucinating,' and we referred to that title. I was a sort of Everyman character trapped by a postmodern structure." He decided to call the piece with Skinner "Murdoch and the Regard of Flight." The name "Murdoch" was chosen because it "had a Beckett-like ring: Murphy, Molloy, Murdoch," and "Regard of Flight"

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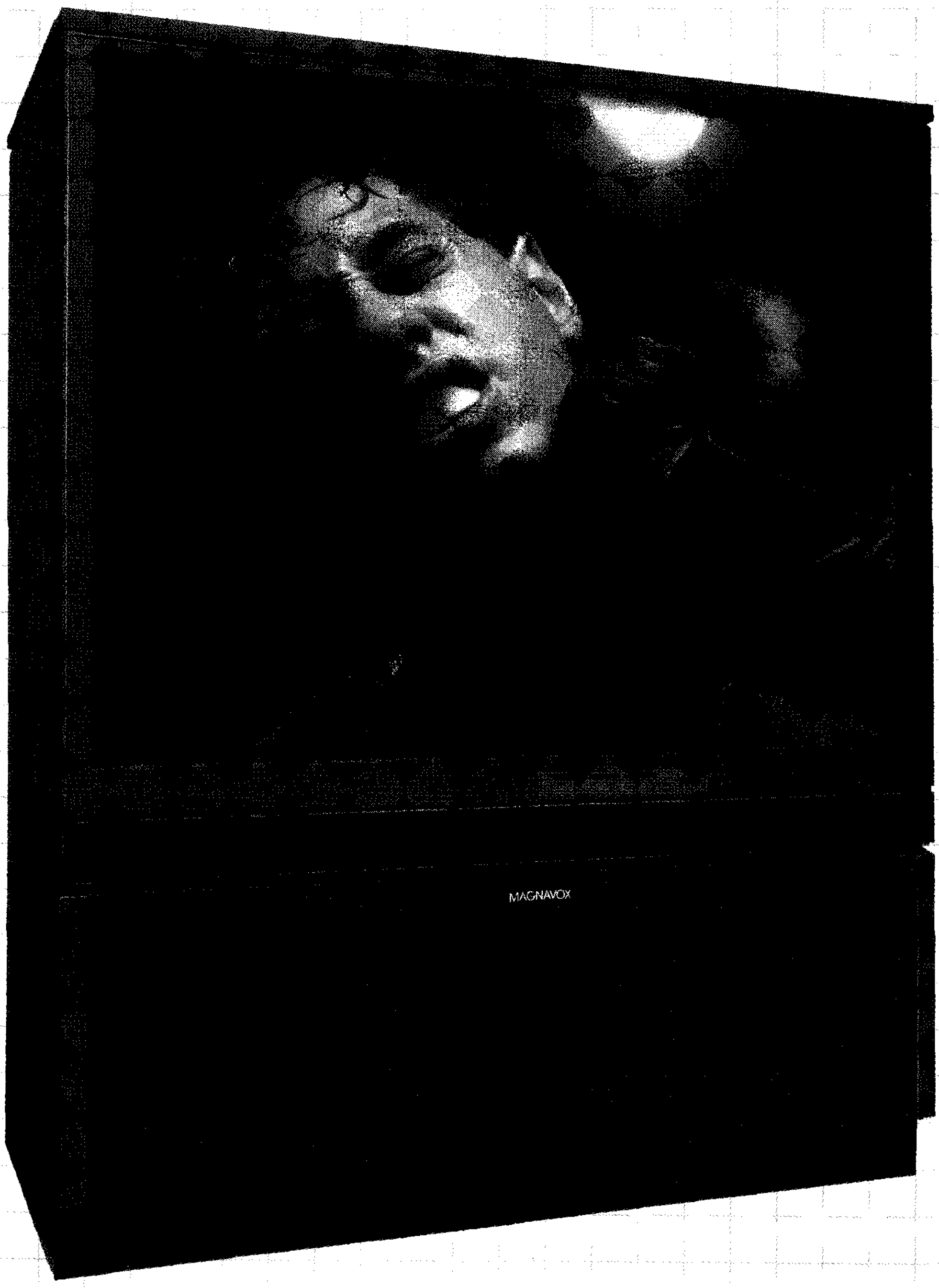

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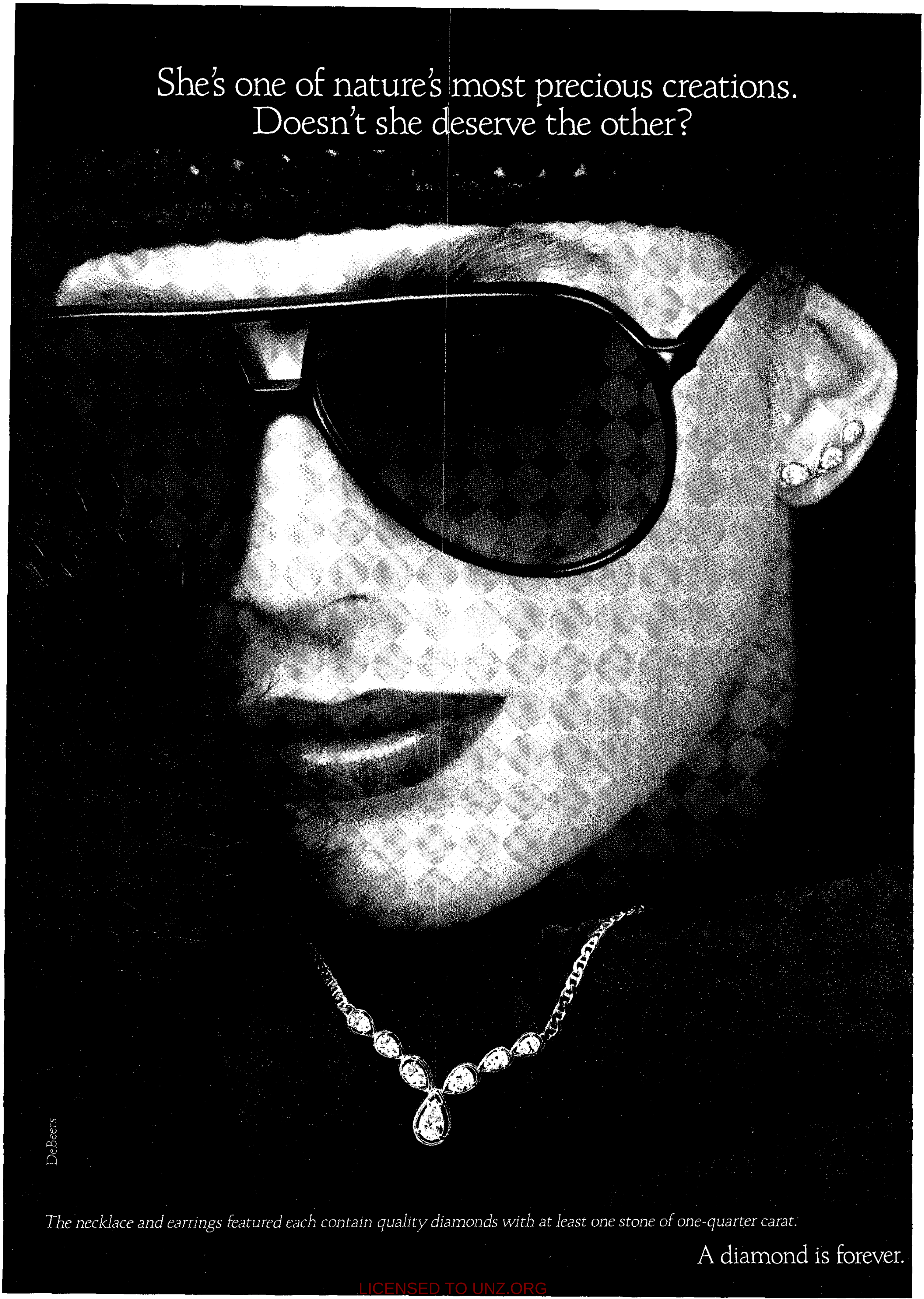
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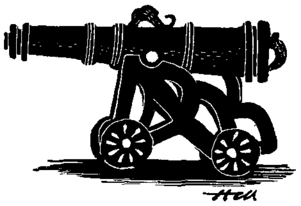
for reasons that may have gone back to Irwin dreams of levitation. Though the performance lasted only fifteen minutes, it was the genesis of "The Regard of Flight" and of Irwin's career as a performance clown.

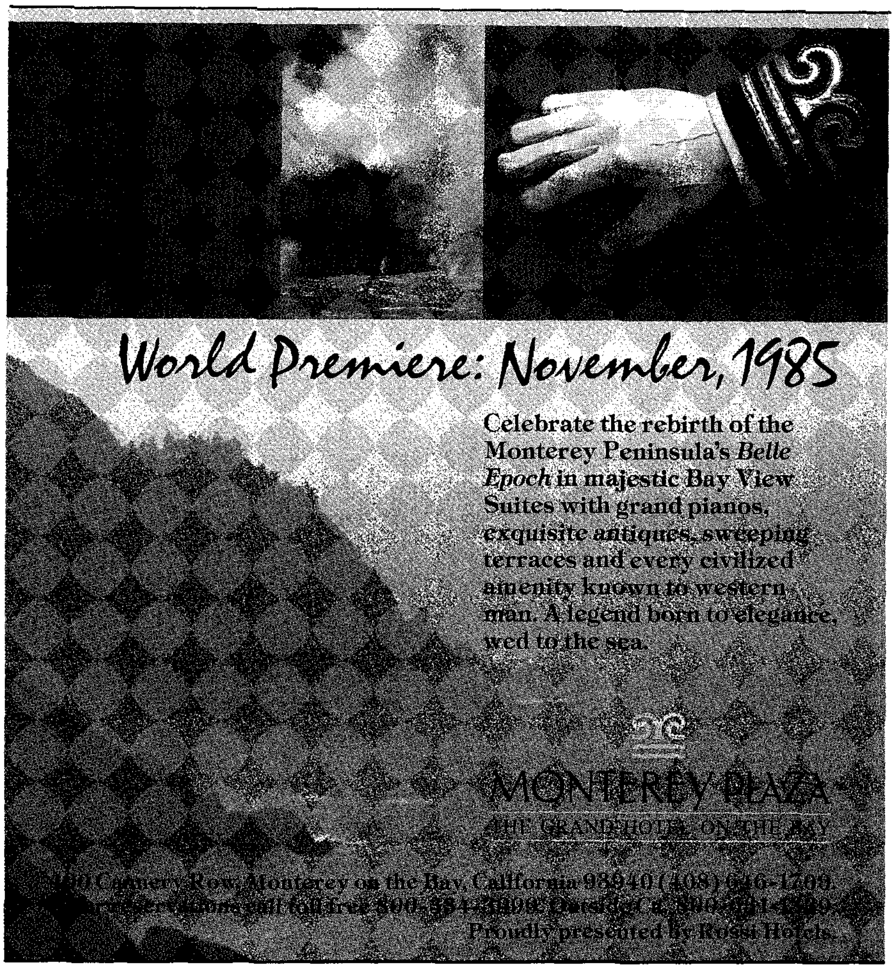
Over the next few years, Irwin invented new pieces and polished them. It was "a long gestation," O'Connor says. "He's a perfectionist. Sometimes he would worry things to death. He'd go through eighty-five versions of a minute of material." In one sketch for the Oberlin Dance Collective, there was a trunk, which became an important adjunct to Irwin's comedy. Tracing his relationship with trunks, he says, "When the Pickle Family began, Larry would pick me up in his van to rehearse, and I would always show up with an armload of stuff. He said, 'You need a trunk.' I bought one, and then another. I always did something to them. As soon as I bought a trunk, I would cut a hole in it. Geoff Hoyle and I did an act in the circus which required cutting a hole in the top of a trunk so it would close on my leg. Just before I sat on the edge of the trunk, Geoff would pick up the lid, and I would fall in. I could never get my leg out of the way in time. Finally, we agreed that we would cut a little hole and mask it, so that I could fall in, he could close the trunk, and my leg would still be sticking out. When we did this, he would close it, and kids in the audience would say, 'Oh, his leg is caught, his leg is caught!' " Later, doing the routine with Doug Skinner, Irwin realized that it would also work with his head sticking out. "That was the rule of thumb in those days—you just picked striking images and made pieces around them. From that image came this association with John the Baptist"—John the Baptist with his head stuck out of a clown's trunk.



Irwin's favorite trunk had belonged to his great-uncle Will Cole, who was a shoe salesman. The setting for one sketch was an empty dance studio, and the only scenery was the trunk. As a joke for his family, he put in the program, "Set design, Will A. Cole." Needing another title for the show, he consulted with Pisoni, who asked him to describe his sketches. He answered, "They're not quite solo pieces." From that came the title "Not Quite," a sentiment that has popped up in various other forms in his subsequent work (shows and sketches named "In Some Regard," "At the Very Least," "Still Not Quite," and "Not Quite/New York")—a sign that he is not quite sure what it is that he does or if any piece can ever be finished. From his point of view, everything is a work in progress.

Working at the Intersection, a seventy-seat theatre in San Francisco, in 1978, Irwin noticed some wooden flats leaning against a wall backstage. They had a velours skirt at the bottom. One day, he stuck his foot in under the velours, and, he says, "it ate the foot." He discovered that by putting his foot under the velours he could pretend that he was being pulled away, foot first, as if drawn by suction. Developing that move, he used it in his act, and it drew so much laughter that it quickly became a motif. Every time he approached a curtain, his foot would begin to slide, followed by his body, until, with a look of helplessness, he was vacuumed off the stage. "Being pulled offstage by a mysterious force" is, to a certain extent, he says, "a clown's reflection" of some of the agonizing exercises that he did with Blau.

The act began to grow. Pieces were held over from one show to the next. Others were dropped and then reappeared in different form. Soon he was celebrated in a small San Francisco circle. Invited to perform at the New Theatre Festival, in Baltimore, Irwin called on O'Connor and Skinner, and they stitched together sketches into a full performance. Needing a name, he called his "company" Murdoch and the show "The Regard of Flight." Baltimore was followed by his movie début, in Robert Altman's "Popeye." Irwin, Larry Pisoni, and Geoff Hoyle were among the scores of clowns appearing in bit parts. In the opening scene, Irwin kicked his hat down a road. Every time he bent down to pick up the hat, he kicked it again. Further expanding his audience, Irwin, together with Skinner, toured Europe, performing in the Netherlands, France, and Italy. "Bill was billed as the musical clown from San Francisco, and we would get audiences of children who would throw paper airplanes at us," Skinner recalls. "Perugia was an absolute disaster. We were booked into a casino. There were flimsy wooden boxes as scenery, and during the show one of the boxes gave way as Bill was dancing. He



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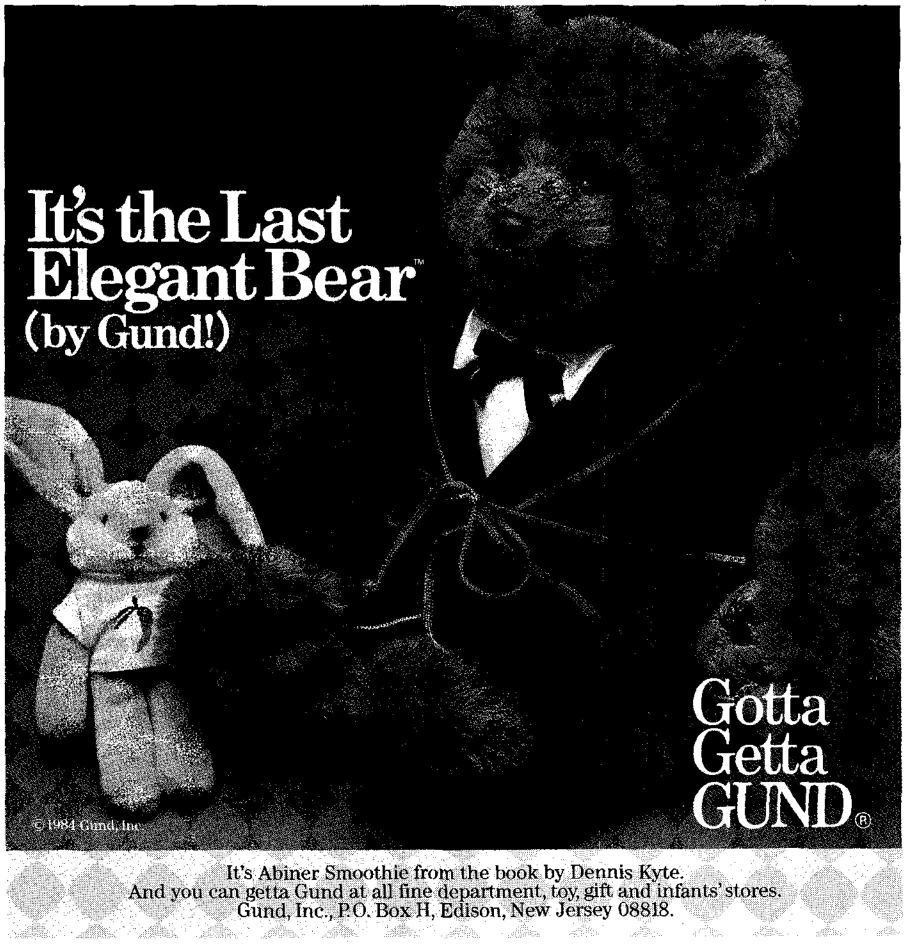

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plunged right through the stage."

Irwin's first New York appearance since Blau's Kraken came with the Oberlin Dance Collective in 1979, as part of a concert at the Dance Theatre Workshop. David White, the executive director of the Workshop, asked Irwin if he would like to do his theatre pieces as one part of a new, late-night series of performance events. That first Irwin evening introduced him to New York audiences as a New Vaudevillian, and it brought him an Obie award for inspired clowning. The following year, he returned to New York with a new show—"Not Quite/New York." That was the first time I saw Irwin perform. The evening was constructed as a series of challenge matches—Irwin against everyone. He was the relentless loser. Michael Moschen outclassed him in juggling. Tommy Sellars roller-skated circles around him. When Irwin was not being upstaged or outrun, he was victimizing himself, tripping over imaginary obstacles and pratfalling when he meant to tumble. In a series of sketches, he played both Pantalone and Harlequin, entangled himself in a gigantic strand of stage spaghetti, and walked down inside a trunk as if he were descending a lighthouse staircase. In the spring of 1982, "Not Quite/New York" evolved into "The Regard of Flight," which opened at the American Place Theatre and established his reputation. The show ran through the summer, was taped for the "Great Performances" series on public television, and was restaged in November of 1983 at the Mark Taper Forum, in Los Angeles. "The Regard of Flight" began with Irwin in bed, in a nightshirt, trying hard to remain asleep. Suddenly, he realized that his bedroom was a stage, with an audience watching. It was an actor's nightmare—of suddenly being thrust into the spotlight and not knowing what to do—and he was immediately torn by warring feelings of timidity and temerity. With variations, he did his pesky-pasta routine, walked down inside the trunk, and demonstrated the art of lean shoes. Clearly, he had no regard for gravity, or for the pretenses of performance art, and this insouciance whetted his satire as his character demonstrated what he calls "a profound mistrust of the proscenium." Whenever he strayed to the edge of the proscenium, he was, hilariously, sucked away.

Soon after "The Regard of Flight" closed, I met Irwin for lunch. This was the first time I had seen him out of character, and he could not have appeared less clownish. Fresh from his New York success, he was looking for work. He had been reading for a leading role in the Broadway revival of "On Your Toes," the "longest-running audition on record." As it turned out, he did not get the role, perhaps because it called upon him to dance "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue" with Natalia Makarova, perhaps because it was felt that his singing voice was not strong enough. Speaking about the difficulty of increasing his opportunities, he mentioned the comic juggler Michael Davis, who was trying to move from comedy juggling into comedy. Testing himself, Davis would bring his juggling equipment onstage, put it on one side, do his act, and fight to see how long he could keep from reaching for his clubs, balls, and knives as life preserver. So far, he had managed only ten minutes before the comic had to turn back into a juggler. Irwin expressed envy for the old vaudevillians, who could polish a twenty-minute act and do it again and again. As we left the restaurant, he stopped to pick up his coat and a bag at the bar. Peeping out of a paper bag was a rubber chicken, newly purchased at a novelty store. He said that he had always wanted a rubber chicken, and would find some way to work it into his act.

Over the next few years, Irwin and I met frequently, often to watch others in the act of being funny, including improvisational actors, and circus clowns at Madison Square Garden. At a circus matinée one day, Irwin was worried that one of the Ringling owners might see him and ask him why he hadn't joined the circus after Clown College. The audience was sparse, and the clowns were largely ignored as people waited expectantly for the animals and the aerial acts. Irwin laughed so appreciatively and clapped so loudly as the clowns performed that they soon began playing to him; he seemed to bring them to life.

One evening, we went to see Marcel Marceau on Broadway. Irwin sat tall in his seat, attentive to every gesture. After the show, we met Marceau at a restaurant next door to the theatre. Having seen Marceau perform many times over the years, Irwin could compare various performances, and he told the mime that that night's David and Goliath was the most moving version he had ever seen. He confessed that years ago he had borrowed Marceau's

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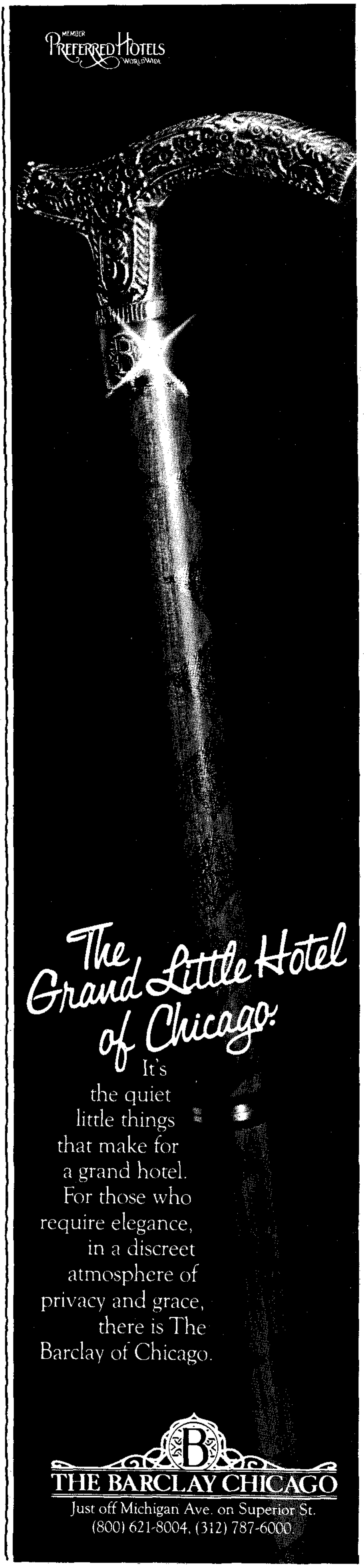
"Mask Maker" and performed variations on it at Renaissance fairs. Because Marceau was not familiar with his mime, Irwin said he would send him a tape of some of his sketches. In addition to their shared gift for mime, there is at least one other similarity between Bill Irwin and Marcel Marceau. Both have perfect timing in performance, and yet neither ever wears a watch, and for the same reason: watches stop on their wrists. "Perhaps it's my magnetic field," Irwin says. Without a watch, he is often late for appointments. "I have a kind of interior clock, but it goes haywire as often as not," he says. "I manage time very badly offstage."

During one month long period, Irwin spent many of his evenings at the Wild Cat Saloon watching George Carl perform. The Wild Cat, briefly in existence, was a New York version of a Parisian striptease club. Between the acts, there would be a guest comic, in this case George Carl. For years, Irwin had heard about Carl from friends who had seen him perform at the Crazy Horse Saloon in Paris. When Irwin learned that Carl was appearing in New York, he went to the show and introduced himself, and they became friends. He had originally assumed that Carl was French; actually, he was an American vaudevillian in his late sixties. One evening, I accompanied Irwin on one of his regular visits to the club. Late in the show, Carl made his entrance—a short fireplug of a clown and a whirlwind of comic activity. Without a pause, he offered a twelve-minute volley of uproarious burlesque routines, in most of them entangling himself with objects. He touched the microphone and found that it had stuck to his hand. Trying to pull himself loose, he became entwined in the cord, which, in turn, became twisted in his suspenders, jacket, and shirttail. Soon he was a cat's cradle of tangled objects and clothes, all of which led to the sudden realization that he had somehow misplaced one of his fingers. Where was it? In his pocket? Inside the microphone? Then he began playing an oversized harmonica, or, rather, the harmonica seemed to be playing him. Through all this delirium, no expression crossed his face, and Irwin, in the audience, never stopped laughing. After the performance, the three of us met in a nearby coffee shop and, with the younger clown's encouragement, Carl talked about his career. He had begun in vaudeville some fifty years before. When vaudeville died, he had emigrated to France and begun an entirely new life as a European entertainer. After closing at the Wild Cat, he was due to join a travelling circus in Switzerland. Irwin savored all the details of the story, with a nostalgia for the not-always-grand old days of burlesque. He suggested that the two of them might work together onstage someday. Some months later, in an appearance at a theatrical benefit, Irwin performed a small homage to George Carl—an adaptation of one of the older man's favorite routines. Taking off his jacket, he realized that his finger was caught in a buttonhole. Twisting and turning, he was soon ensnarled in his own clothing.

Between engagements, Irwin has on several occasions taught workshops in physical comedy—classes that are attended by professional dancers as well as clowns, mimes, jugglers, and maskmakers. The simple announcement that Irwin is offering workshops immediately leads to oversubscription from the performance-art community. I participated in two series of classes (at the Dance Theatre Workshop), taking them as an opportunity to watch him communicate the mechanics of his art. In vigorous training sessions, he offered instruction in such subjects as tripping, cantilevering one's body, making clown faces, pratfalling, slapstick, and hat moves—tossing a hat high into the air and catching it by the brim. He was both the teacher and a member of the class, often illustrating a comic point by acting it out or by describing the work of a clown from the past. "Okeydokey," he would say as he gathered the class around him and demonstrated how to use parts of one's body as clown vocabulary. "Let's be gloriously ridiculous," he said, encouraging his students. Walking over to a curtain, he turned his back and started shaking one of his shoulders. Was he laughing or was he crying? Laughing, a member of the class guessed. He turned around, and he was crying imaginary buckets of tears. Turn and turnabout: identical shaking of the shoulder, and he was laughing giddily.

For the final meeting, he asked the members of the class to pair off and to prepare a brief physical improvisation on the theme of ambivalence. One dancer who had the long legs and high pockets of a Tommy Tune accentuated his height by taking loping



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strides around the studio—and then suddenly sat down. Another leaped over a chair and tried to land head first in his hat on the floor. Another held a top hat in front of his face and sidled out in front of the class while shielding his face from view. His partner stared at him as if he were insane, and the class, as audience, laughed. After the session, Irwin talked to me about the improvisations. He said that he regretted not asking the class why the final hat move was so funny. "The question would have been valuable," he said. "What was being done was very funny in and of itself, but the partner's reaction, which was almost subliminal, made it even funnier. She didn't want to look, but it was clearly written on her forehead, 'What is he *doing* that's making them laugh like that?' "

Irwin offered a post mortem on the workshop itself. "I have mixed feelings of accomplishment," he said. "I thought everybody's work in exercises was phenomenal, but I quite often misled as well as guided. A lot of people in the class were mimes and clowns. What often happens when they're given a job of performing something—and I'm the worst offender—is that the proposition goes out the window and they show something they've done before and can do well. I would like to find a graceful way to explain that telling a story is the essence of theatre and that the less we know of the story before we tell it the better the show will be. Too often with clowns and mimes, you see two moves and you know how the game is going to end."

IN the fall of 1983, Irwin brought Willy the Clown to New York as the feature of a public lecture-demonstration on clowning. Wearing top hat and tails, he walked onstage at the Dance Theatre Workshop and sat at a dressing-room table. Taking off his hat, he replaced it with a knitted cap and began putting on his makeup—Stein's Clown White. As he transformed himself into Willy, he talked about the history of American clowns. "George Lafayette Fox was an American clown in the nineteenth century who went crazy toward the end of his life," Irwin said. "He slowly gave way to dementia. People speculated that it was caused by his lead-based makeup. I think it was not so much the makeup as the number of times he had to put it on and take it off." Soon Irwin's face was white, and he patted his skin with a white sock containing baby powder. "Clowns are segregated in the circus because of the cloud of powder," he said. "When elephants begin to sneeze . . ." With a brush he painted lines on his face, tears under his eyes, stars over his eyes. He put on his red fright wig, big shoes, and top hat and, holding his cane, demonstrated a clown's walk-around. The hat tumbled off his head. He tried to pick it up with the cane but could not snare it, so he dived head first into the hat and stood up, to applause. "The heart of clowning for me is how to get yourself into dilemmas," he told the audience. "I don't have to look for them—they come my way." In a scene that Irwin performed, Willy was a waiter. He peeled off his white gloves, and as the right glove came off so did his right hand. Where was it? He peered up the sleeve. At last, he found the hand up there, and then he began taking things out of a trunk—a plate, a pot of spaghetti, his rubber chicken. He reached deep into the pot with a fork and was quickly tangled in pasta. Hauling at it as if it were fishing tackle, he twisted and turned, and at the end of the string was a fat red lobster. Later, appearing out of the trunk, he introduced three teen-age break dancers, who scurried crab-legged across the stage. Irwin tried to mimic them; finally, he crouched in a knee bend and bobbed his head in time to the music. While an imaginary electric current pulsated through his partners' bodies, he was doing nothing, and winning laughs. He stood up and walked to the curtain, and was vacuumed offstage.

WHEN there were opportunities, Irwin and I watched films and tapes of other clowns, including "Unknown Chaplin," rare footage, edited by Kevin Brownlow and David Gill, of Chaplin at work. Irwin was more than an audience; one could feel him drinking in Chaplin's performance as we sat at the Museum of Broadcasting and watched the painstaking repetition and finely shaded alterations that enriched Chaplin's art. As is true of other clowns, some of Irwin's originality is adaptation. Even as a self-invention, he reflects Keaton, Chaplin, Harpo, Phil Silvers, Sid Caesar, and will adapt aspects of their techniques into his own routines. Clowns consciously borrow from one another. "You can almost feel the genealogy," Irwin says.

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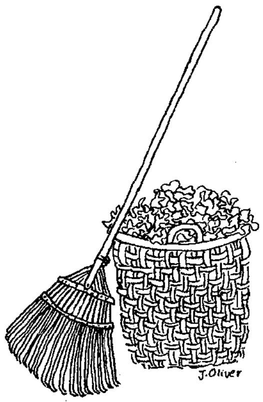
Irwin is reluctant to talk about humor, and when he does he often defers to others. "There's that wonderful quote from Shaw," he said one day, and then tried to remember it, finally deciding that Shaw—or was it Beckett?—had said, "Laughter is the natural expression of despair." Comparing comedy and tragedy, Irwin said, "It's the same heaving of the viscera." When I suggested that "The Heaving of the Viscera" might be a good title for his autobiography, he said, "That would be my Blau-type book." He quoted a definition from an unknown source: "A comedian is someone who says funny things. A clown is someone who says things funny." He added, "And if you don't have a funny face, you have to find ways to make funny faces. This is a generation of normal-looking comedians—Chevy Chase, Dan Ayckroyd. It's very different from the era of Bert Lahr, where you had to be a zany. Comedy is infinite. Anything that reflects on life in such a way as to make people laugh is comedy. Just the act of laughing out loud makes me feel good."

In his own work, Irwin shapes his ideas in rehearsal. "I have to think on my feet, although sometimes writing it down helps set a sequence in my mind," he said. Once a piece is performed, however, the text should have weight—one should be able to read a routine. "You know what I think is one of the best pieces of theatre ever written? The 'Who's on First?' routine of Abbott and Costello. It's *funny* right on the page. It uses all the permutations just enough times so as not to overdo them. Actually, they changed the routine a lot. I've listened to different recordings of it, and I saw a piece of film of them doing it for a U.S.O. show after they had been doing it for many years. It was amazingly fast. There's also a conversational nature to physical comedy. Certain pieces of pantomime have a structure exactly like 'Who's on First?' Just as it starts to get predictable, some different element comes in. When you create a comedy walk, the biggest trick is to attach your face and your consciousness to it. What makes it funny is that's how *this* person walks. It isn't something I'm fabricating for an abstract reason. It's a character."



As an illustration, Irwin described a short film of Grock, the legendary Swiss clown. "He had an absolute assurance and incredible skills," he told me. "I've read his biography and other things about him. He was an amazing musician and acrobat. In the film, he picks up a violin and plays a short concerto while he does funny things with the props. The props are not elaborate—a chair, a piano, a violin case. They seem utterly ordinary, but he makes them do things. He stands on a chair and the bottom of the chair falls out. Suddenly, he's standing on the floor inside the chair playing the concertina, and, to the music, he jumps back up and sits on the back of the chair and crosses his legs—all in one movement. It's a wonderful signature jump. Another of his signature bits: he would sit down at the piano and realize that the piano was far away from him; he would get up, roll up his sleeves, and push the piano closer to his chair. Or he would try to flip a violin bow in a certain way and never get it right. He would go behind a screen and do it. The audience would see the bow flying up, and then he would come back out and try it in front of everyone. But he would still not get it right. He would go back behind the screen and practice. Later in the act, after he'd done something else, he'd thoughtlessly *throw the bow* up in the air and catch it—and realize that he'd done it!"

Irwin described a favorite sketch from a Phil Silvers television show. "In this show, Silvers has gone out many times with this girl, and she wants him to come home and meet her parents," he said. "He doesn't have the nerve to tell them he has dishonorable intentions, so he decides he's going to be really flamboyant, an obnoxious practical joker. He buys a bunch of gimmicks and tricks and pulls them out at the girl's house, and there's a deadly silence. Then it turns out that the parents are really into practical jokes, too, and they're delighted to meet him."

About the Marx Brothers, Irwin said, "In their movies, there are moments that are incredibly funny, and there are moments that don't work." It is no surprise that, of the Marx Brothers, Harpo is the one he feels closest to. "Harpo has a clown inno-

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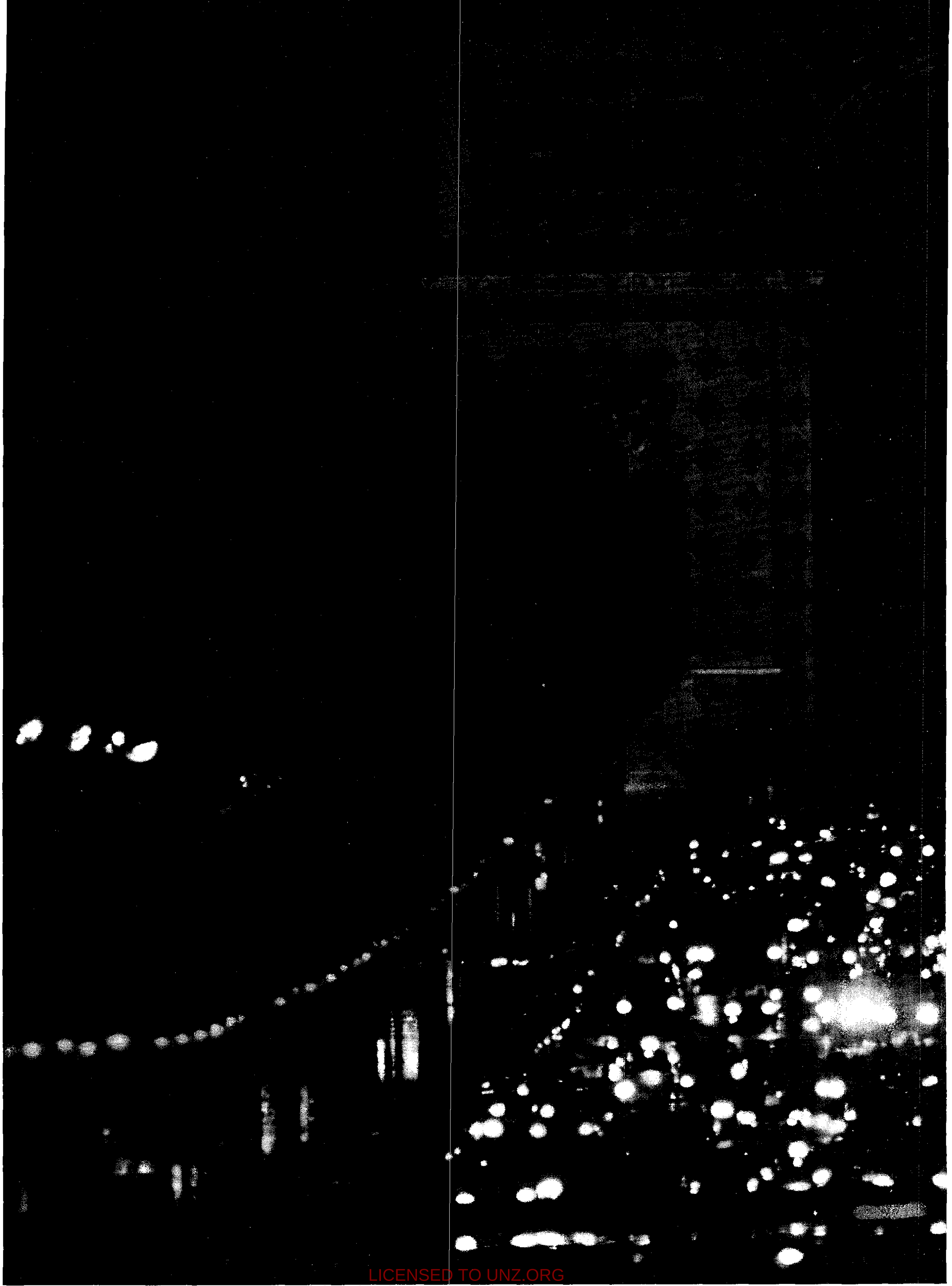

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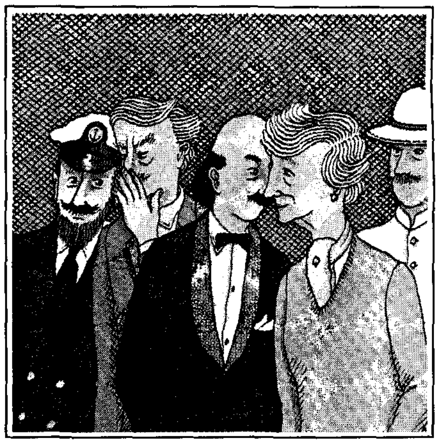
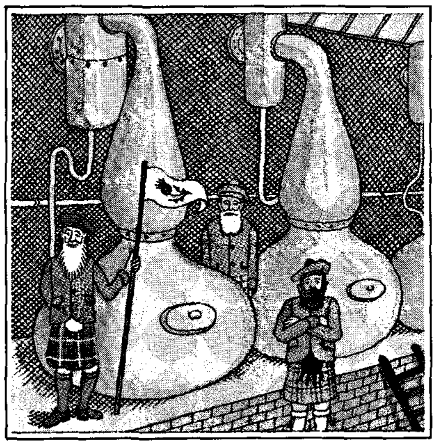


Despite the good will of the season, base suspicions filled my mind. "Was there a plot amongst my pals to put a *blended* Scotch beneath my tree? Had some cabal of cronies shared the sterling Single Malt among themselves?"



Then the horror of it struck me. "If my friends were not at fault, had the ancient copper stills worn out? Had Scottish Nationalists seized Banffshire? Was there no more *Glenfiddich* to be had?"

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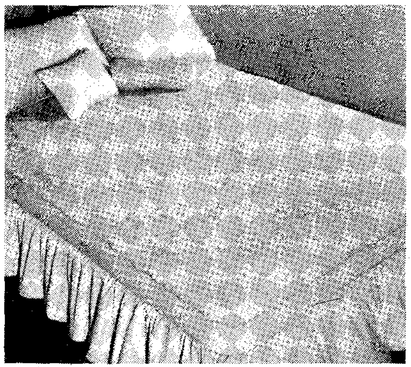
cence," he said. "When he is chasing a girl, another girl comes into his field of vision and he goes after that one. He runs after the girl who is closest to him. You never get the feeling that he's being lascivious. Sometimes there's a touch in Groucho, as there was in Chaplin, of someone who is going to make you laugh whether you want to or not. One thing Groucho does that is very funny: he speaks the subtext. When someone comes onstage and you're thinking about her ridiculous hat or her large bust, he says what's on your mind. On a technical level, one thing I admire and envy in Marx Brothers films is the skill of the straight men. They set up the whole bourgeois reality against which these anarchic clowns can react. In 'Monkey Business,' the Marx Brothers wreak havoc throughout the whole ship. Every stateroom they burst into has a feeling of stuffy propriety. That's what Margaret Dumont does so well in their other films—stuffiness of grand proportions."

In Irwin's comic pantheon, the Marx Brothers take a back seat to Buster Keaton. "I read a story about when Keaton was on the skids and was hired as a gag writer for the Marx Brothers," he told me. "He wrote some business for Harpo. It was about stacking straw on a camel's back—putting on one last bit of straw and the camel goes down to his knees. Then he would take a couple of straws off so the camel could get up. It was a very Keaton-like gag. When the Marx Brothers heard it, they didn't bat an eyelash. My image is that they just stared at Keaton, as if to say, 'That's what we brought him in for?' But I can see Keaton doing that gag—putting straws on, taking straws off.

"In one Keaton movie, there's a gag in which tough, out-of-work guys are standing in line at the unemployment office. There's a mannequin at the end of the line. Keaton stands behind it, and it never moves. Too late, he finds out that he's standing behind a mannequin. He tries to go to the front of the line, and finds out that the window is closed."

About Keaton himself, Irwin said, "He was a heavy smoker and an alcoholic, but he was a phenomenal human specimen. Near the end of his life, he was trying to direct a train crew in a movie. He wanted them to run out of a tunnel. A train was coming. None of them could run fast enough for him, so he ran to show them how to do it. With big, heavy shoes, this old guy running. They never could run fast enough for him." Comparing himself physically with Keaton, he said, "My body is this sort of long spaghetti noodle and his was like a whippet." Years after Keaton died, Irwin discovered that as a teen-ager in California he had lived only a few miles away from the great clown. While the Irwins were in suburbia, Keaton had a ranch in the San Fernando Valley. When I suggested that Irwin might have sought him out, he said, "I don't know what I would have said to him." He thought for a moment, and said, "I'd have asked him, 'What is *in* you that I could learn to call on?' "

WINNING the MacArthur prize in 1984 gave Irwin wider credibility, and gave him money to support his clown habit for five years, but it did not alter his style of life or his attitude toward his career. Having settled in New York, he continued to live in his cluttered Greenwich Village apartment. And though the rest of his family is in California, the Irwins remain very close. Each is in frequent contact with the others, and they all retain their natural interest in the theatre. Any day, they may appear onstage together—instead of the seven Foys, the five Irwins. Before Bill won the prize, he had committed himself to playing a small role in Dario Fo's "Accidental Death of an Anarchist" on Broadway. After the play completed its abbreviated run, he joined the ensemble of "The Garden of Earthly Delights," a theatre-dance piece created by Martha Clarke. The role was a physically demanding one, which called for him, at one point, to float above the stage supported by wires. He received offers to revive "The Regard of Flight," but he decided that he would prefer to move on to new work (although he later agreed to do the show for a brief return engagement at the Arena Stage, in Washington, D.C.). For some time, he had been contemplating doing a vaudeville show about courtrooms—an idea that he traces to two specific sources: when he was in school in Ireland, he saw a Czechoslovakian animated cartoon about party politics in Eastern Europe in which dots scrambled to occupy a position of eminence; and he remembered a *New Yorker* cartoon in which a judge opened a door at the foot of his bench and, inside, there were stairs leading upward. In addition, he was fascinated by various burlesque and vaudeville routines on the subject. He



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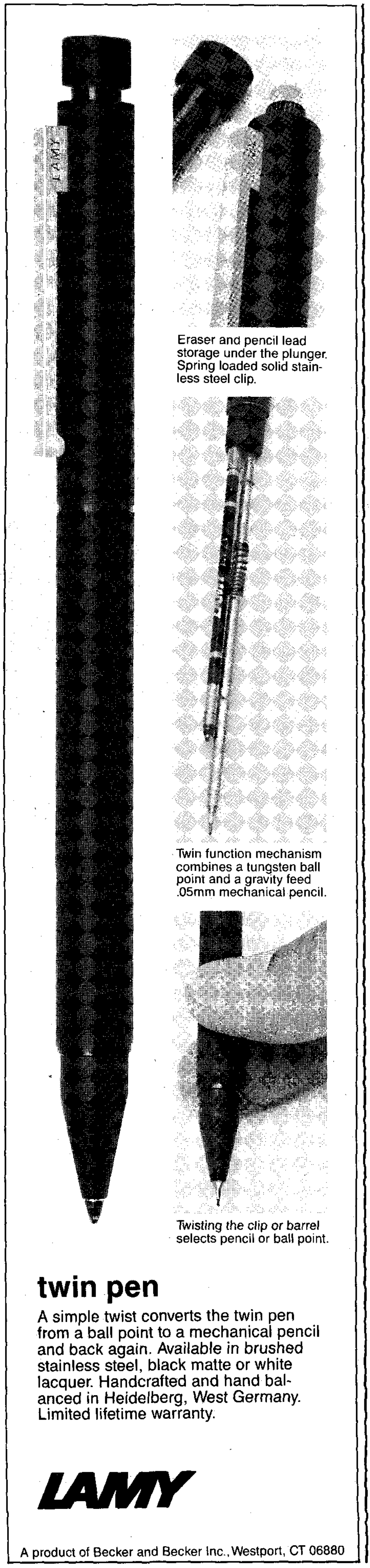
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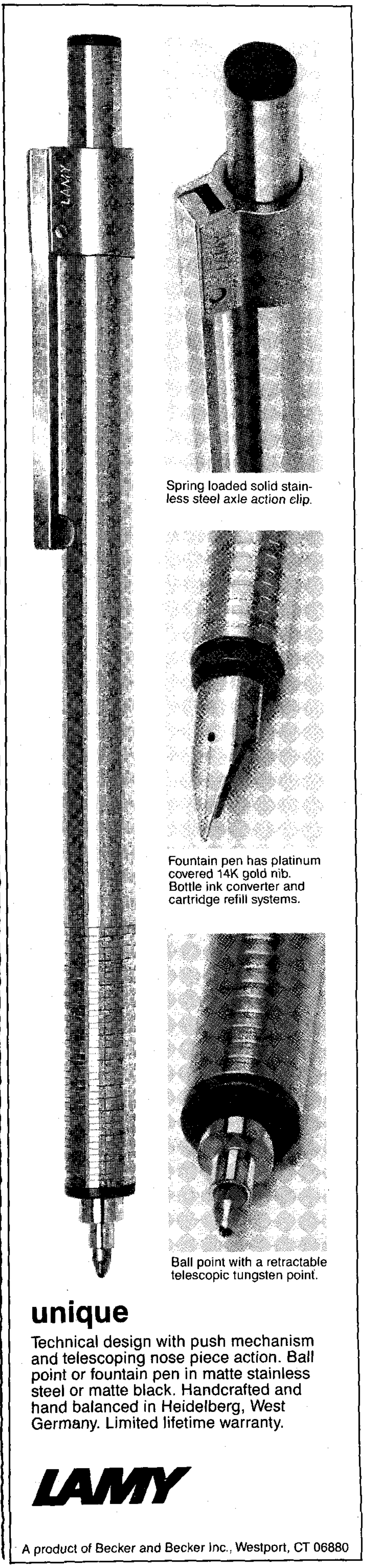
began to write sketches, and in the spring of 1985 he gathered a company, including old friends, such as Michael O'Connor, Doug Skinner, Michael Moschen, and Brenda Bufalino, who had taught him tap dancing, and some new friends, such as the clown Bob Berky. Consulting an attorney, he discovered that lawyers have a vaudeville turn of phrase; they talk about going into court and "doing their number." As he took his show into rehearsal off Broadway, he removed the hats from the wall of his apartment and took them to the theatre, where they surrounded the company. The clown was back in business.

With characteristic circumspection, Irwin regarded "The Courtroom" as a work in progress, polishing it as he performed it, and vowing—after its limited engagement—to return with it at a later date in a different form. For variety and as a challenge, he signed up for a season at the La Jolla Playhouse, in California, an adventurous summer theatre under the artistic direction of Des McAnuff. In 1985, Irwin appeared in two plays—in the leading role in Brecht's "A Man's a Man" and in a supporting role in Chekhov's "The Sea Gull." The Brecht was a particular success, and in it Irwin had one of his favorite acting moments, as he explained to me recently. In a climactic scene, his character, Galy Gay, is threatened with execution. He pleads to be spared. The firing squad aims, Galy Gay faints, and the bullets are fired into the air. The pleading, Irwin said, "is a gut-wrenching thing." The mock execution followed by his fainting is a laugh. If the scene is done well, he said, the audience "is pulled in one direction, and then turned back." When I asked if he was emboldened by his success as an actor in a classic, he said that he was "emboldened to the point of hubris." He would like to do plays, such as "A Man's a Man," "Waiting for Godot," and "The Servant of Two Masters," that "call on me both as an actor and as a clown."

In our many conversations, I wondered, as he had about Keaton, what was "in him" that other clowns could learn to call on. One afternoon, as we sat in his apartment watching tapes of his past performances both as Willy and in his own guise, Irwin offered a clue. It was a memory of his days in the third grade at the Patrick Henry Elementary School, in Tulsa, Oklahoma. In a speech class, the teacher asked the children to make up pan-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tomimes, which the others in the class would try to guess the meaning of, as in charades. Remembering the first time he was called on, he said, "It was a dusty Oklahoma schoolroom. I walked into the center of the room. There were desks on all sides of me. I was *utterly* terrified, but at the same time I had a certain faith that I knew what I was doing. The night before, I had seen Goofy playing a reckless driver in a cartoon." In imitation, Irwin pretended to be a reckless Goofy, driving an imaginary car and dodging pedestrians and other vehicles. "I remember doing a fall. I jumped in the air and found myself on the ground. That went over big—not necessarily with the teacher but with the kids. So I tucked that away." He wanted his classmates to guess the exact model for his mime, but, eager to please, he gratefully accepted all their guesses. "One would say, 'Your man is driving a car too fast and gets in an accident.' I would say, 'Yes, that's it.' " On that and subsequent days in the school spotlight, Irwin had what he called "a perfect score." At eight, he had found his first appreciative audience.

Even at that very early age, Irwin had an ambivalent response toward performing. "I remember being very conscious of how I felt when I sat down," he said. "Either full of myself—this post-performance thing, where I didn't watch the next three kids—or a kind of eye-stinging feeling of failure. The more I performed, the more I knew it was going to be one or the other. I was going to feel either terrible or great afterward. That class was my first sense of being *there*, of having that peculiar performer's buzz that you get when you're onstage and it's going well. With all the artifice, that's about as real as one can get. That's very sad. It makes one feel as if all the rest of life were lived in a state of preparation for those few moments. Many years later, I wrote some poetry at college, and my brother picked out one line—'I cry to be present.' " Contemplating that line, he said, "It's scary. When you're onstage, part of you wants to be off as fast as possible. Once you're offstage, everything is in anticipation of the next time you're on."

—MEL GUSSOW

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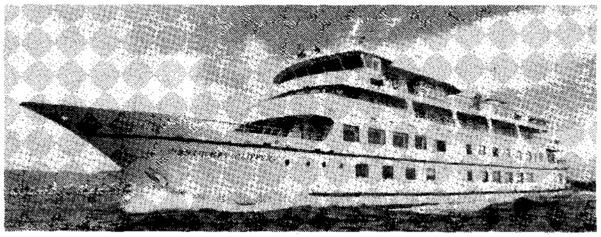

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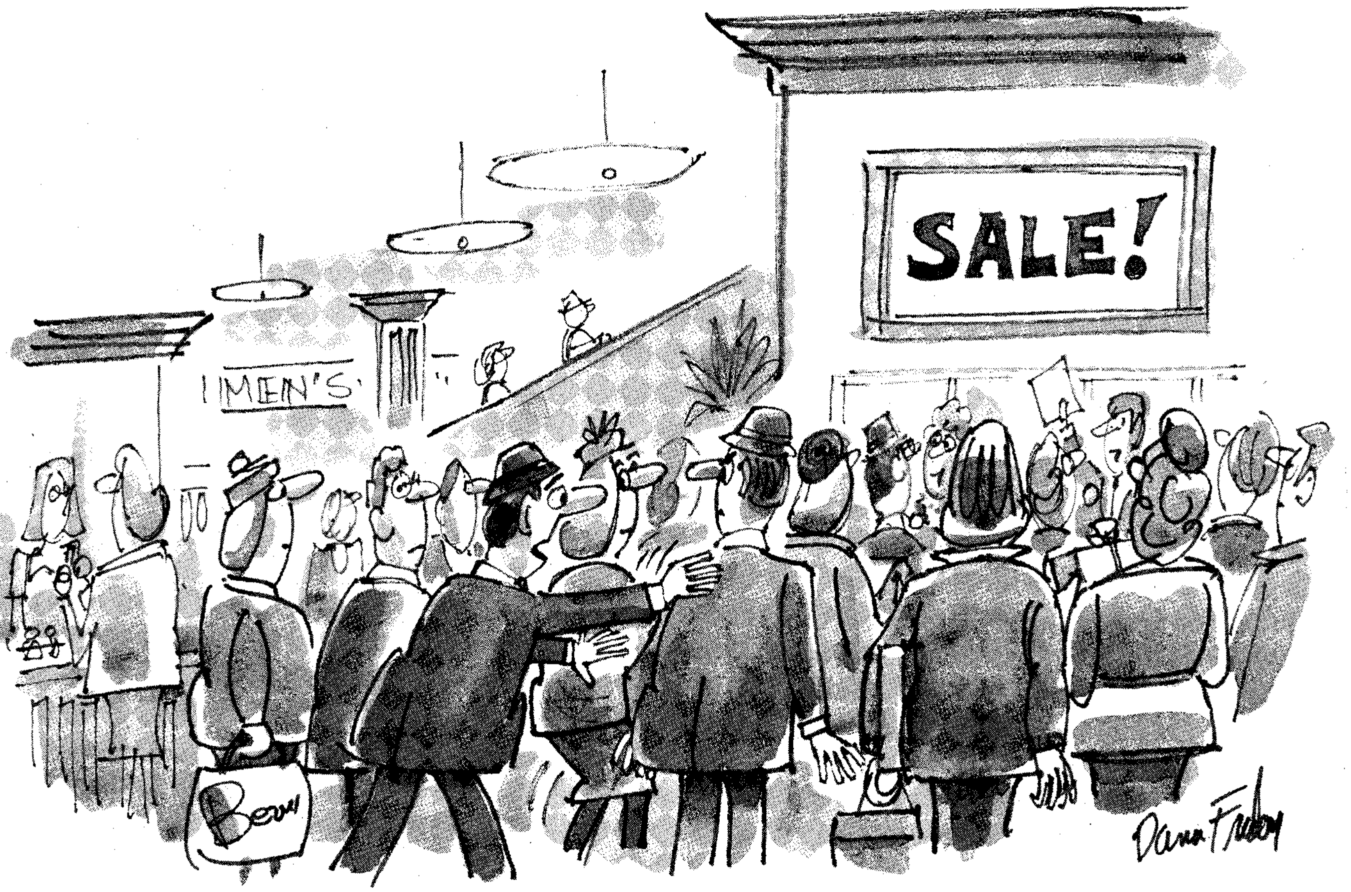
THE AMERICAN MILLENNIUM

IF the ghosts of Franklin Roosevelt and George Marshall were to return today, they would—it is certain—find the role of the United States in the world a good deal changed since their time. They would find American power and influence remarkably diminished, in spite of the growth of a vast strategic military arsenal. They would also find that the country had abandoned many of the policies and principles that in their view contributed to its greatness: the search for peace in a just world order, for a stable international economic system, and for an end to poverty, ignorance, and disease. In addition, they would find that the temper of the nation's leaders had changed considerably: instead of a jaunty self-confidence or a benign paternalism, they would encounter a defensive churlishness combined with adolescent self-promotion—a tendency to brag and strut.

As for specific foreign policies, the ghosts would find many of them inexplicable. American officials were now calling the government of a small Central American country a grave threat to American national security. They were sniping at many of the international bodies that the United States had created; they were using the United Nations as an emotional outlet for their grievances against small, poor countries; and they were creating major victories or defeats out of their success or failure in capturing handfuls of terrorists. The ghost of F.D.R. would no doubt have chuckled at the spectacle of the spiritual heir of Robert Taft going to Peking to visit the Red Chinese; he would at the same time have wondered why the same President seemed unable to make any sort of deal with the Soviet leaders. A certain solipsism, the ghosts might note, was now abroad in the land. The American public apparently believed that the invasion of a Caribbean island a hundred and twenty square miles in area was a major victory for the United States and a proof that it was "standing tall." As for the level of the foreign-policy debate, it had descended to the point where the Republican President could not explain what eighteen hundred Marines were doing in Beirut when an unidentified fanatic blew up their headquarters, killing two hundred and twenty of them, and his Democratic opponent in the 1984 election could not present a set of policies easily distinguishable from the President's.

Seeking some explanation for the decline of American power in the world, the ghosts might wonder whether the Soviet Union had not won the Cold War and forced the United States into retreat. Looking east, however, they would find that the Soviet Union had not gained very much ground. It had recovered from the war, of course, but its economy was still not performing well. The Soviet leaders had put a high proportion of their resources into building a military arsenal, and had attained strategic parity with the United States. This strategic arsenal, however, brought them largely theoretical advantages; practically speaking, it served them no better than the American strategic arsenal served the United States.

The postwar military lines were



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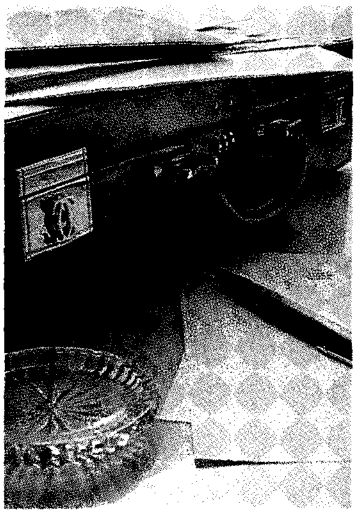

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still in place in Europe, and the Marshall Plan had worked even better than its creator had dared to hope. In 1947, there had been some reason to believe that the West European democracies might collapse and, under pressure from their Communist Parties, move into the Soviet orbit. But now the political tide had turned; it was only Soviet tanks that kept most of the East European countries within that orbit. On its eastern borders, the Soviet Union was more or less blocked. In 1950, it was said by many that the United States had "lost China;" now it appeared that the Soviet Union had lost it far more decisively. The one advance the Soviets had made was into Afghanistan, but in that harsh country bands of ragtag guerrillas had tied down well over a hundred thousand Soviet troops for almost six years, and the Soviets' client regime was still too weak to stand on its own. In the rest of the world, the Soviets had developed a few client states, but none of any reliability except those whose economies they were subsidizing on a vast scale (in Cuba's case, four billion dollars a year). The Soviets could not afford any more friends like Vietnam and Cuba; *they had said as much to the* Nicaraguans.

Finally, and most important, the life had gone out of Soviet Marxism-Leninism. The Soviet leaders still trumpeted the old phrases, and there were still a lot of excited young men around the world willing to repeat them for the price of a Kalashnikov rifle, but the words had become little more than white noise. The Communist Parties in Western Europe had withered, and Soviet-style economics had proved unworkable—particularly in the nonindustrialized countries. What remained of Leninism was Lenin's analysis of revolutionary conditions, and the structure of the Party as a management system more efficient than most military dictatorships. But as a language and a faith Communism had proved too thin a gruel to sustain the life of any nation. George Orwell had envisaged a world where giant bureaucracies erased historical memory, but by 1985 the new revolutionary movements were springing from religious and cultural reaction. In fact, the world of 1984 was by and large the very opposite of the one George Orwell had sketched in 1948: instead of two or three great empires, a world of a hundred and fifty-odd nation-states and dozens of separatist movements—from the Eritreans to the Basques to the Sikhs—and, instead of two or three vast bureaucracies managing passive populations, an endless succession of rebellions, revolutions, coups, and civil wars, plus an extraordinary clamor of voices demanding one thing or another.

This constituted the real change since the days of Marshall and F.D.R. Until the Second World War, the colonial powers had ruled half the planet without great expenditures; the British had governed all of India and the French all of Indo-China with fewer than a hundred thousand troops between them. That was the world Orwell grew up in—where national politics were the affair of small élites, and the great mass of the people knew only their own tribes and villages. But then an explosion occurred: the traditional social structures were swept away, and the kings, tribal chieftains, and former colonial functionaries along with them. The new politics brought forth a strange array of new leaders—Indira Gandhi, Fidel Castro, Muammar Qaddafi, Lee Kuan Yew—but whether the result was good government, bad government, or no government at all, these countries were *now astonishingly resistant* to control from the outside. In the nineteen-eighties, the Soviets could not pacify Afghanistan, the Israelis could not control southern Lebanon, and it was all that the United States could do to occupy a small island in the Caribbean. In the late nineteen-seventies, American statesmen made plans to defend the Persian Gulf against a possible Soviet move to cut off the so-called economic lifeline of the West. In the nineteen-eighties, the United States and the Soviet Union stood on the sidelines as observers of a war between two Third World countries, Iran and Iraq, over that same Gulf, neither of the great powers having a firm idea of what was happening on any given day, and, worse, neither of them knowing which country it would prefer to see win.

It was understandable that the Russians would not fare very well in this *new world, for, with all their talk of* "progressive forces" and "the socialist brotherhood," they had a peasant style of conservatism and an authoritarian turn of mind that rejected both novelty and equality. Their history had not prepared them for the clamor of the United Nations any better than it had prepared them for the electronic information age. The Americans, on the other hand, should have found it, if

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not an ideal world (it was hardly that), at least a familiar one. With its outlaws and vigilantes, it had some smell of the old American West; it was a world of market forces unrestrained, and it was, for better or worse, a fulfillment of President Woodrow Wilson's hope for national self-determination. Why, then, did Americans seem to find it so dangerous and uncomfortable a place? "We live in an age of anarchy both abroad and at home," President Richard Nixon had said in April of 1970, and he had continued:

> We see mindless attacks on all the great institutions which have been created by free civilizations in the last 500 years. Even here in the United States, great universities are being systematically destroyed. Small nations all over the world find themselves under attack from within and from without.
>
> If, when the chips are down, the world's most powerful nation, the United States of America, acts like a pitiful, helpless giant, the forces of totalitarianism and anarchy will threaten free nations and free institutions throughout the world.

This was Nixon speaking, a man of the American West, from a town not a century old, who in his time attacked the freedom of a number of institutions, including the University of California. (He wished to impose a loyalty oath on its faculty.) What he was speaking about here was not a barbarian invasion of New England but, rather, his own order for a small movement of American troops across the Vietnamese border into Cambodia.

Most Americans, if they were asked to identify the major turning point for the United States since the Second World War, would point to the Vietnam War. The defeat was a trauma from which the national psyche had hardly recovered by 1984—that was how television commentators tended to put it. This conception, however, might have puzzled Marshall and F.D.R. For the United States, the Vietnam War did not represent an effort in any way comparable to the Second World War; the reserves were never called up. True, it had gone on for a very long time and had cost a great many lives, and had been unsuccessful as well as unpopular. But now that it was over no American politician seemed able to explain why the United States had sent troops to Vietnam in the first place, or what it had lost by failing to win. "Credibility" was the usual answer. But what did that mean? The defeat had no effect on national security as defined by real assets, such as sea-lanes or markets—

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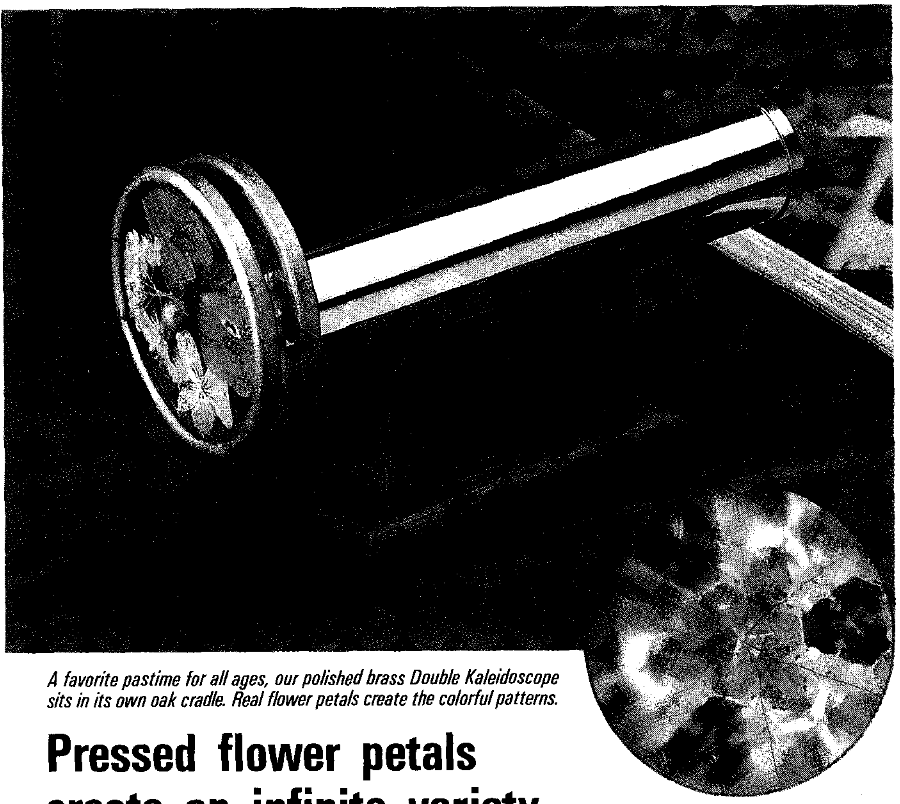
or even allies in Southeast Asia. Indeed, the United States was now arguably in a better position in Asia, militarily, economically, and politically, than it had ever been before.

WHAT, then, was the explanation for the strange, erratic nature of American foreign policy? What explained the fear that American politicians seemed to have of the Third World, and the sense of imminent crisis that inhabited their rhetoric? Small problems seemed to inspire enormous reactions, while the serious, long-range problems got no attention at all. The fact that politicians and other commentators described the consequences of the Vietnam War in psychological rather than political terms suggested that the problem was subjective. And, indeed, a good many foreign-policy experts thought that it was.

Henry Kissinger, for one, confronted the question directly in his memoirs. During his years in office, he wrote, he had proposed a consistent foreign policy involving a "permanent exertion" on behalf of two long-range goals: maintaining the "global balance" and avoiding nuclear war. His grand design had, however, been thwarted—on the one hand, by his President, who was unaccountably ruined by the Watergate scandal, and, on the other hand, by the American people, who could not understand the subtlety of his approach to the American-Soviet relationship and would not commit themselves to the "permanent exertion" necessary to sustain it. He now thought it possible that the American people might be by their nature incapable of making a "permanent exertion" on behalf of any long-range foreign-policy goal, since throughout their history they had been caught up in a cycle of "exuberant overextension and sulking isolationism," each conceived in moralistic terms. The idea, he said, did not originate with him. And, indeed, he was far from alone in this belief. In foreign-policy circles, it was the conventional wisdom that the United States had historically alternated between moralistic interventionism, à la Woodrow Wilson, and moralistic isolationism, à la Robert Taft. It was also the conventional wisdom that this was the source of the problem and the reason the country could not establish a stable, coherent foreign policy.

The historical argument was, however, mostly nonsense. From the



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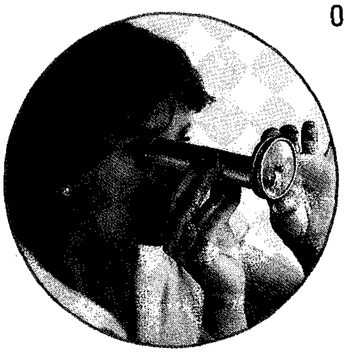

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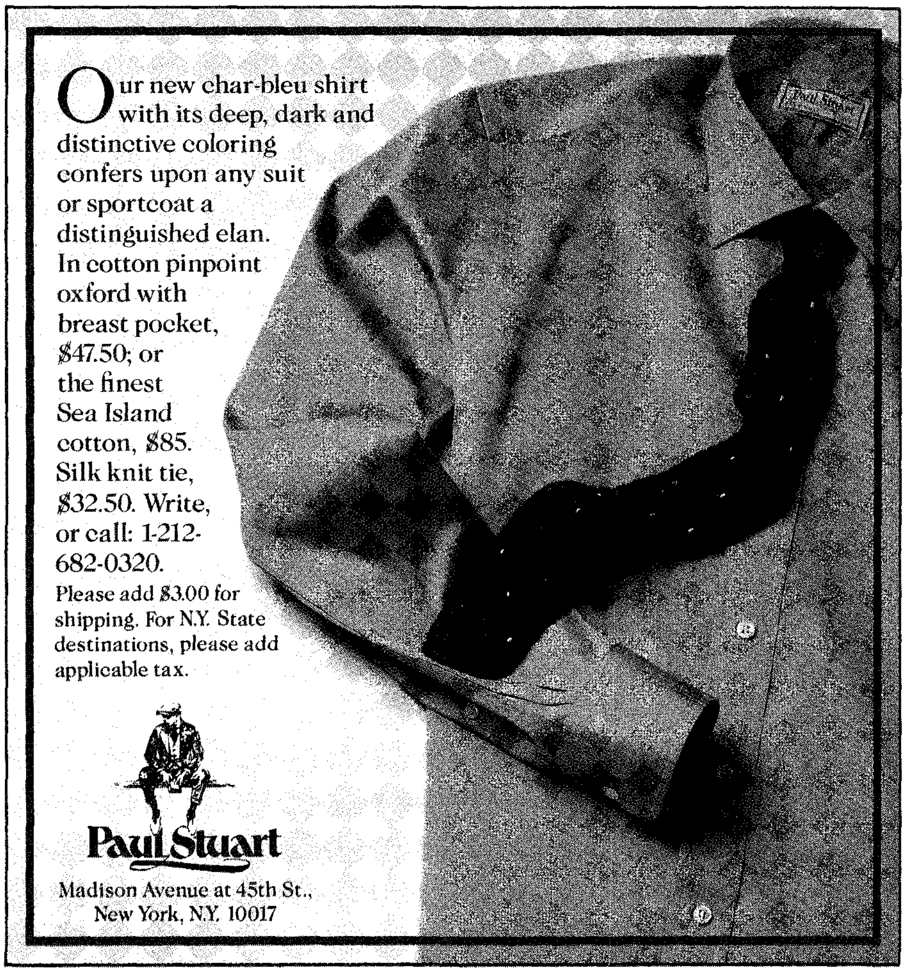

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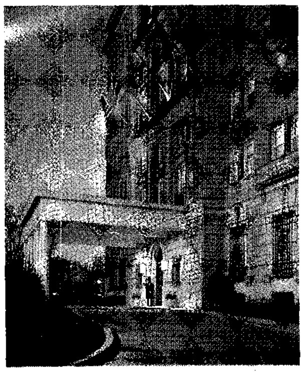

founding of the Republic through the First World War, and even, arguably, the Second, American foreign policy had been perfectly stable. The country had pursued long-range interests with persistence—and with remarkable success. In recent years, historians have taken to saying that President Washington established an "isolationist doctrine" in his Farewell Address. He did nothing of the sort. What he said was that the United States should "observe good faith and justice toward all nations" and "cultivate peace and harmony with all," avoiding "permanent, inveterate antipathies against particular nations and passionate attachments for others." Europe, he continued,

> has a set of primary interests which to us have none or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves by artificial ties in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships or enmities.
>
> Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. . . . It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world.

What Washington counselled was not isolationism but, rather, the pursuit of American interests independent of the revolutionary and monarchical superpowers of Europe. What he counselled, as Garry Wills has pointed out, was a strategy of nonalignment, much like that adopted by Nehru, Sukarno, and other Third World leaders after decolonization. Washington had to make more of a case for it than Nehru did, because of the thinness of the cultural membrane that separated Americans from Europeans. "I want an *American* character," he wrote, "that the powers of Europe may be convinced that we act for *ourselves* and not for others." What Washington and his immediate successors wanted specifically was freedom for American shipping in the Atlantic, European markets for American goods, and freedom of opportunity for American traders and settlers in the New World. The doctrine did not preclude temporary alliances for these ends, but it specifically rejected the making of alliances for emotional (or moral) reasons in favor of a rational pursuit of national interests.

Washington's successors heeded this testament and pursued a consistent and coherent foreign policy for a century thereafter. There were no cycles of "withdrawal" or "overextension;"

rather, there was a "permanent exertion," of the sort that Kissinger would have approved, in two directions. Nonalignment vis-à-vis Europe was one, and the other was expansion to the west and south. Even in Jefferson's time, the colonization of new territories was not just a private matter; it was government policy, and a policy that, given the European colonies and the indigenous peoples in North America, could not possibly be called isolationist. Jefferson wanted Canada and Cuba; he got Louisiana instead. His successors, one after another, moved the borders of the nation out by means of war, treaty, and purchase. Even before the frontier was closed, they pushed across the Caribbean, into Central America, and across the Pacific.

In 1823, President Monroe added a third strand to American foreign policy. What the Monroe Doctrine meant in detail was debated by succeeding Administrations, but what it was in effect was a combination of the two other policies applied to the southern part of the Western Hemisphere. Its aim was quite simply to push the Europeans out of the hemisphere as far as they could be pushed, and, like the two other policies, it could in no way be called isolationist.

In fact, the term "isolationist" came into currency only after the First World War, and then as a term used by self-styled "internationalists" to derogate those who opposed American participation in the League of Nations and, later, in the war against Hitler. But it was sometimes a misnomer, for some of the politicians (such as Senator Kenneth Wherry, of Nebraska) who opposed intervention in Europe were the most ardent interventionists when it came to the Caribbean, Central America, or the Far East. The Republican Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, of Massachusetts, opposed the

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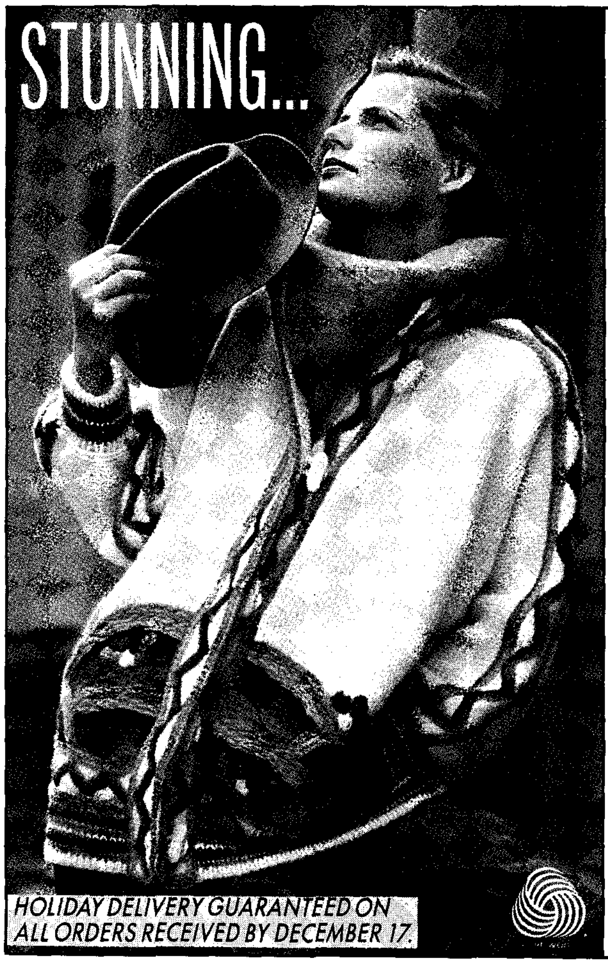

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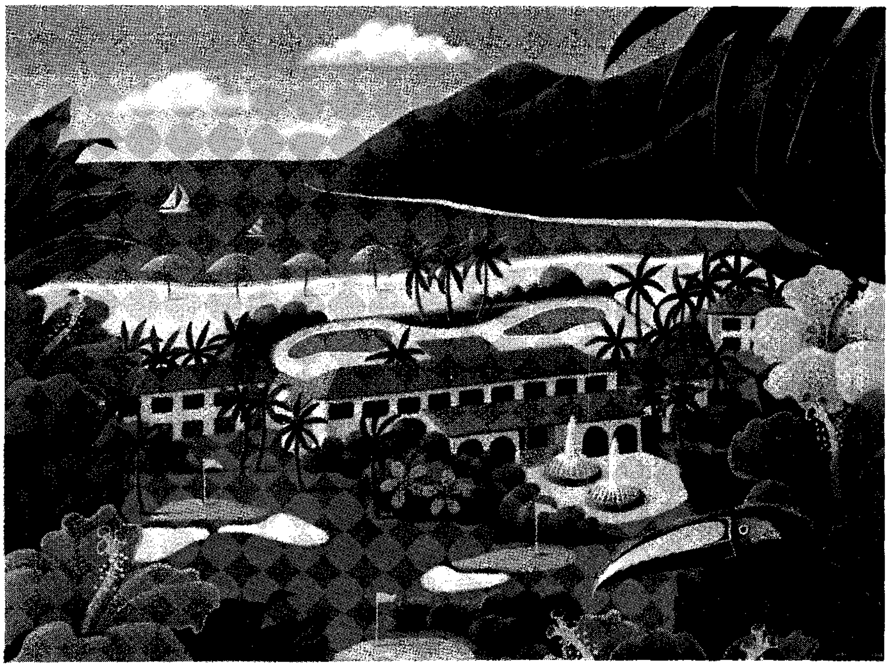

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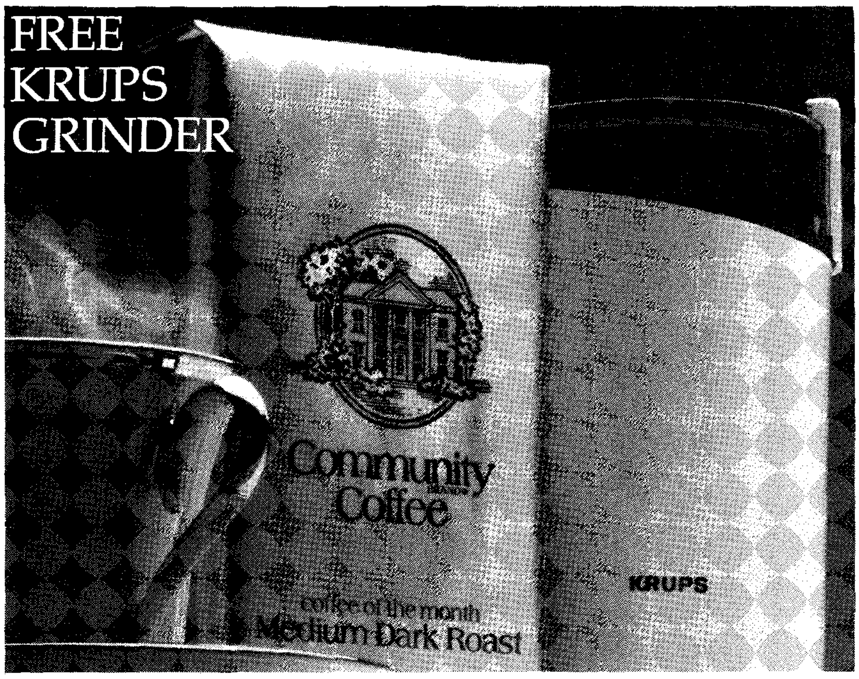
League of Nations treaty but rivalled Theodore Roosevelt in his enthusiasm for the Spanish-American War, the building of naval stations across the Caribbean and in the Pacific, and the annexation of the Philippines. What "isolationism" meant, as Wills has noted, was merely a tropism to the south and west rather than to the east, and it was to a great degree a regional phenomenon. Midwesterners, whether Progressives or conservative Republicans, tended to favor wars on the opposite side of the continent from Easterners. While New Englanders sometimes opposed Western projects, such as the war against Mexico and the annexation of the Philippines, Westerners had no appreciation of American interests in Europe. In the late nineteen-thirties, the historians Charles and Mary Beard identified these two schools of thought more precisely as "collective internationalism" and "imperial isolationism."

Conventional wisdom to the contrary, the vagaries of current foreign policy have little to do with the history of American foreign policy before the Second World War. They have, however, a great deal to do with what the collective internationalists and the imperial isolationists said to each other when they finally met. They also have to do with the popular religious vision of American foreign policy and the role of the nation in the world. As the appellations imply, the difference between the two groups was more than one of geographical inclination. By the start of this century, they had very different pictures of the world, and of the role of the United States in it. The collective internationalists, largely Democrats, looked east and saw a continent of heavily armed nations with large empires, strong economies, and strong cultural ties to the United States. Europe might be on the decline, but it was the civilized world. Beside it, the United States was a "developing country," and not a little provincial; until the First World War, it depended on European capital and on European science and technology. The imperial isolationists, on the other hand, most of whom were Republicans, looked west and saw stretches of territory inhabited by peoples of alien cultures, all of them technologically and militarily inferior to the United States. The businessmen looked upon Central American and Asian countries as producers of raw materials and new markets for manufactured goods; the missionaries looked upon them as huge reservoirs of unsaved souls. In the view of the imperial isolationists, the United States was becoming the preëminent power in the world; it had no peers, it had no need for alliances, and it had almost no need for diplomacy. Pearl Harbor brought the isolationists into the Second World War, and after the war they could not conceive why the United States had "lost China" to Mao Zedong. Senator Robert Taft, the isolationist *par excellence*, supported military intervention on behalf of Chiang Kai-shek and supported MacArthur's drive into North Korea.

While the isolationists pursued one of the two "permanent exertions" of American foreign policy, the internationalists pursued the other. But, much earlier than the isolationists, they faced the need for a change of tactics, and even of strategy, to accommodate changed circumstances. The industrial revolution had compressed the distance between the United States and Europe. How, then, should the United States pursue its long-term goals? Woodrow Wilson, who is generally thought of as the iconoclast of traditional foreign policy and almost the inventor of "exuberant overextension" conceived in moralistic terms, acted, it could be argued, along fairly traditional lines. In August of 1914, at the outset of the First World War, his Administration proclaimed American neutrality and demanded freedom of the seas for neutral nations. This was the United States' traditional demand, and the European nations responded, as they usually did *in extremis*, by rejecting it. England, the major naval power, put its lack of agreement into practice by cutting American trade with the Central Powers. Wilson refused to try to embargo England, though his Secretary of State, William Jennings Bryan, insisted that an economic embargo was the only course consistent with American neutrality. Wilson's

Barbara Lerner



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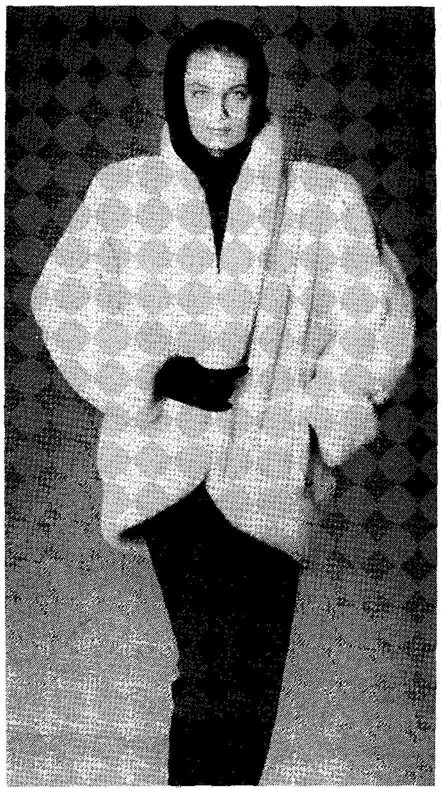

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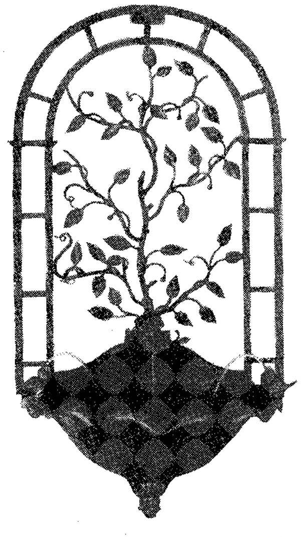

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sympathies lay with the Allies, it is true, but Wilson also knew, as his predecessors had known since Waterloo, that when England went to war the United States had the choice of complying with its trade restrictions or having no trade at all. Under the circumstances, it was Bryan's insistence on "neutral rights" that was quixotic and self-defeating.

Then, too, whatever Wilson felt about the European democracies, he brought the United States into the war only in 1917—and then with conditions for the peace. Among his Fourteen Points, a number, such as freedom of the seas and a limitation on armaments, embodied traditional American foreign-policy goals. Others, such as the creation of a League of Nations, could be read as attempts to adapt traditional American foreign policy to the twentieth century. Major wars in Europe (not the "ordinary vicissitudes" and "collisions") had always been bad for the United States, and now that military technology had made them at the same time more likely and more threatening to the nation the attempt to create a stable order in Europe could be justified as practical, hardheaded policy.

Wilson, it turned out, was absolutely right in predicting that a peace based on military victory and demands for large-scale reparations would be a peace founded "upon quicksand." He couched his demands for national self-determination and democracy in absolute terms, and he called himself an idealist on this score. All the same, his attempt to remake Europe at the Versailles Peace Conference could be interpreted as a kind of Progressive trust-busting operation designed to break up the great-power monopolies so that they could not restrain trade or start another world war. Where he was unrealistic was in his belief that the Europeans would fall in line with his plan, and in his hope that the isolationists could be convinced that if there were to be another major European war the United States would have to fight in it.

In fact, it was only after the Second World War that the "permanent exertion" of the United States faltered—and then, it is worthwhile to note, on the European front alone. In the nineteen-thirties, the failure of the United States to respond to Hitler did not appear to be a departure from established policy—not even to the "internationalists," who favored a response. Only after the war did the "interna-

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tionalists" see it as a major abdication, and only then did they feel the guilt of Munich devolve upon themselves. What was now required, in their view, was a major, sustained effort to see that a Munich would never happen again. They discovered, however, that even the Second World War had not changed the outlook of the isolationists. When President Harry Truman and Secretary of State Marshall tried to persuade an important group of congressmen to appropriate four hundred million dollars in aid to Greece and Turkey, they found the congressmen loath to spend anything for the Greek monarchy in its civil war with the Communists or for the Turkish regime in its effort to resist Soviet intimidation. Under-Secretary of State Dean Acheson then tried another tack. "Like apples in a barrel infected by one rotten one," he said, "the corruption of Greece would infect Iran and all to the east," as well as Africa, by way of Asia Minor and Egypt—and, by the bye, Europe. Truman's subsequent statement that "it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures" might have been an attempt to make Acheson's claim sound a bit more reasonable. But Acheson had found the lever that would move the isolationists. The congressmen voted aid to Greece and Turkey on the ground that Greece and Turkey were the gateway to Asia.

The Truman Doctrine augured a new era in American foreign policy. The Second World War changed the world in a way that not even the First World War had done, and thus the United States required a new definition of its role. The Truman Doctrine, however, did not provide the definition; it merely expressed a pious intent. The internationalists, of course, had their priorities: the defense of Europe, and the containment of the Soviet Union in Asia Minor. And they acted upon them. The Chinese under Chiang Kai-shek might be a "free people," but for Truman and Acheson that was not sufficient reason to commit American ground troops to the folly of trying to rescue China from Mao Zedong. Fearing the isolationists, they never enunciated their priorities. This did not save them from the wrath of Senators Robert Taft and Joseph McCarthy, but it saved their policies. There seemed nothing to be gained from precision:

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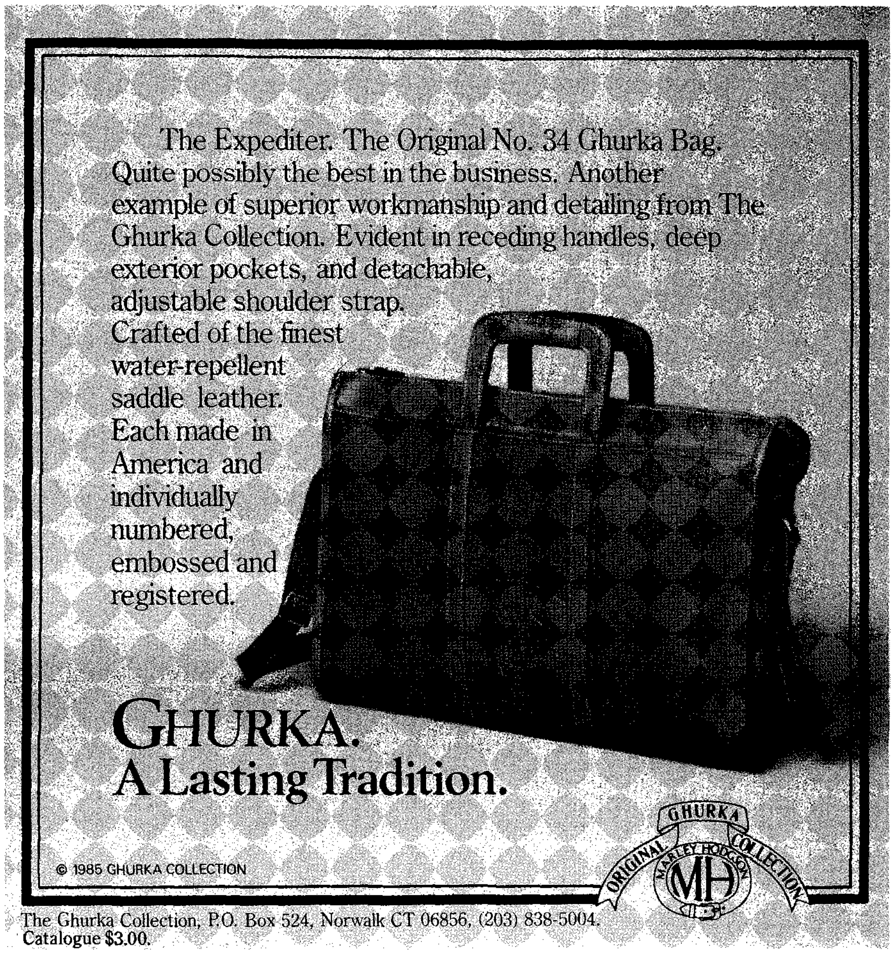

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vague global commitments were politically the safest.

IN the end, Acheson's "rotten apple" simile proved more applicable to his own speech than to the Greek civil war, for that speech infected the rhetoric of American foreign-policy makers for years. In the nineteen-fifties and sixties, American congressmen could not seem to appropriate a dollar in foreign aid without proclaiming it critical, crucial, or vital; American Presidents could not take the most modest of initiatives, such as the formation of the Central Treaty Organization, in 1955, or the launching of the Alliance for Progress, in 1961, without assuring Congress that it would save the world from Communism. Indeed, the anti-Communist rhetoric seemed to swell in inverse ratio to the importance of the initiative, reaching a fortissimo when it involved an attempt to sell some policy that had only the most marginal application to the Cold War. The result was general confusion among policymakers about priorities and a corruption of the relationship between them and the public at large. While the policymakers suspected that there were some limits somewhere, they continued to commit the United States to the support of free peoples everywhere, and thus to the strategy of advancing in all directions at once. Inevitably, miscalculations occurred. In 1950, MacArthur crossed the Thirty-eighth Parallel and brought the Chinese into the Korean War. In 1956, the Hungarians revolted in the hope that the Eisenhower Administration would act on its promise to roll back the Soviet lines, and were crushed by Soviet tanks. In 1963-1965, the United States committed itself to a war in Vietnam that it had no strategy for winning.

The American commitment to Vietnam was something more than a miscalculation. Since it extended over a long period, the motivating forces can be discussed quite sensibly in a number of ways. But any explanation has to take account of the atmosphere of the times. In retrospect, the notion that stopping the Vietnamese revolution at the Seventeenth Parallel would end all "wars of national liberation" around the world or, alternatively, would stop all of Southeast Asia and Oceania from "falling to Communism" must sound a bit farfetched. In the mid-sixties, however, a great many otherwise sensible Americans took these propositions quite seriously. For twenty years, the country had gone through a series of mood swings about the state of the world: on the one hand, the sense that Americans could control events everywhere if they made the effort; on the other hand, the sense that if they did not the whole free world would crumble. According to Eisenhower, Indo-China was the first of a series of dominoes; according to Kennedy, Vietnam was "the keystone to the arch, the finger in the dike."

The metaphors controlled—and, at least in the public domain, prevented—the usual sorts of cost analysis. A few high officials, in the privacy of their access codes, made the analysis with a fair degree of accuracy. In 1961, for example, Defense Secretary Robert McNamara wrote in a private memorandum that the war effort would require at least two hundred thousand American troops. His estimate fell short, but at the time it would have shocked the American public. Even three years later, President Johnson was running for election on a platform of keeping the Communists out of Saigon and American troops out of the war. Such was the corruption of the political dialogue that government officials dared not say what they thought to be true lest rival politicians denounce them as defeatists, soft on Communism. Later, the same officials wondered why the anti-war demonstrators called them liars and attributed the worst possible motives to them.

Of course, in the early to middle sixties even those officials who saw Vietnam as a risky proposition found it hard to believe that the United States could not in the end prevail. The British and the French had gone through their traumas of decolonization, but—except for China—Vietnam was the first place where the United States had met the new politics of the Third World. In the nineteen-fifties, American intervention of the sort undertaken on behalf of Ngo Dinh Diem had proved successful in a number of "underdeveloped" countries. In South Korea and the Philippines, for example, the United States had bolstered—even created—friendly governments and damped down insurgencies. In other parts of the world, it had dispatched unfriendly governments with little effort and little publicity. In 1953, it took one Central Intelligence Agency operative only three days to depose the government of Muhammad Mossadegh and restore the Shah of Iran to the Peacock Throne; in 1954, it took

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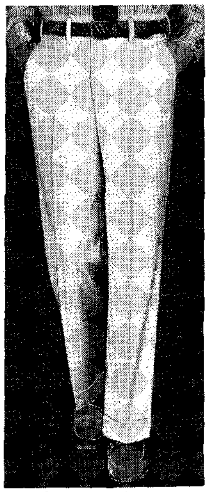
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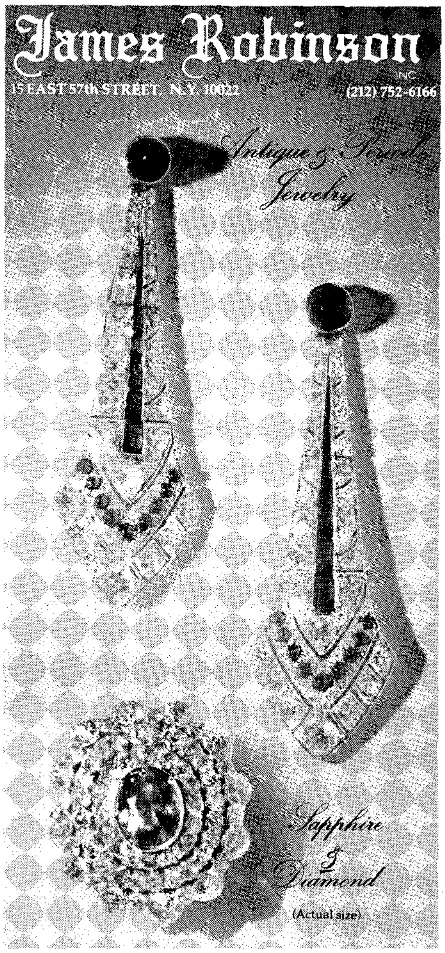
South Vietnam was different in that it had a strong Communist movement with a secure rear area, but why should Ngo Dinh Diem not succeed there as Syngman Rhee had in South Korea, creating conditions for a permanent partition of the country? Even in 1965, with Diem gone and the writ of the Republic of Vietnam extending barely to the airport, most officials believed that American forces plus strategic bombing would stop the Communists. General William Westmoreland believed it. Even in 1967, Robert McNamara could not predict with certainty that the war could not be won—not with half a million American troops, an open-ended commitment, and as much latitude as any government had ever had in fighting a limited war.

By 1972, certain realities had hit home in official Washington: not just the reality of military power in Vietnam but others as well, such as the Sino-Soviet split, the growth of the Japanese and the West European economies, and the newfound leverage of the oil-producing countries. Recognition that the United States had to redefine its role came not only within the McGovern wing of the Democratic Party but also within the old foreign-policy establishment and the Nixon Administration. The way prepared by the National Committee on United States-China Relations, with encouragement from prominent businessmen, Nixon and Kissinger went to Peking. They then went to Moscow to discuss a number of new subjects. And after the 1973 Yom Kippur War Kissinger went to the Middle East to start work on a comprehensive settlement between Israel and the Arabs. The three initiatives were ground-breaking. In statements accompanying them, Nixon and Kissinger made it clear that anti-Communism was not the only motivating force of American policy. The United States had an interest in a relationship with China; it had an interest in certain limited forms of coöperation with the Soviet Union; and it had an interest in a just peace in the Middle East for its own sake.

What American interests were in the rest of the world remained unclear, however. The ink hardly dry on the January, 1973, Paris agreement on Vietnam, Kissinger called upon the nation in Achesonian rhetoric to ad-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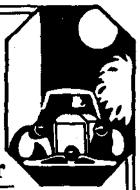
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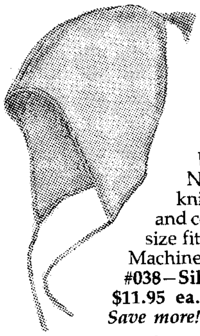
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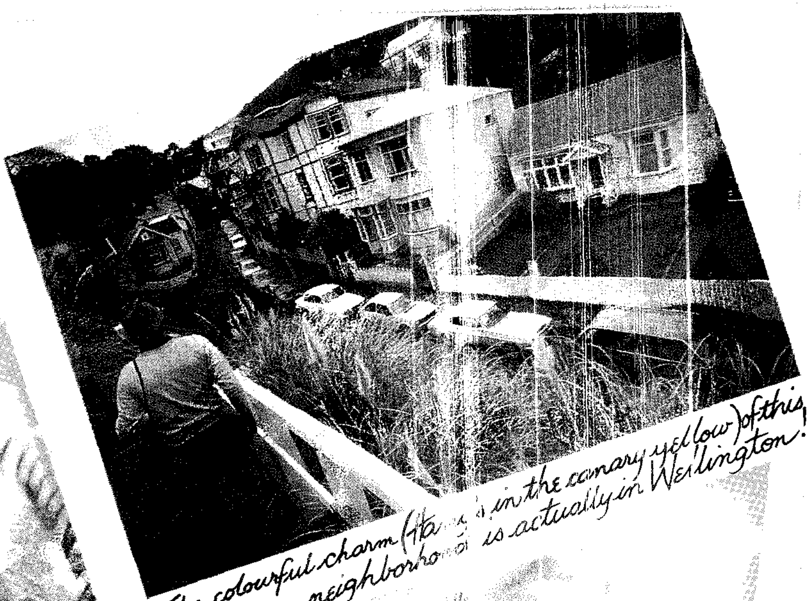

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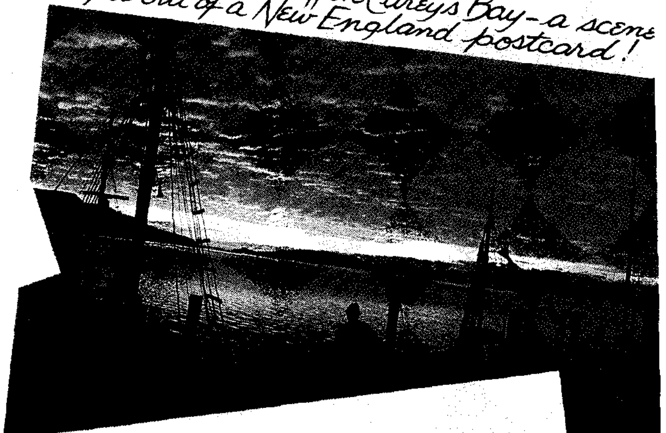

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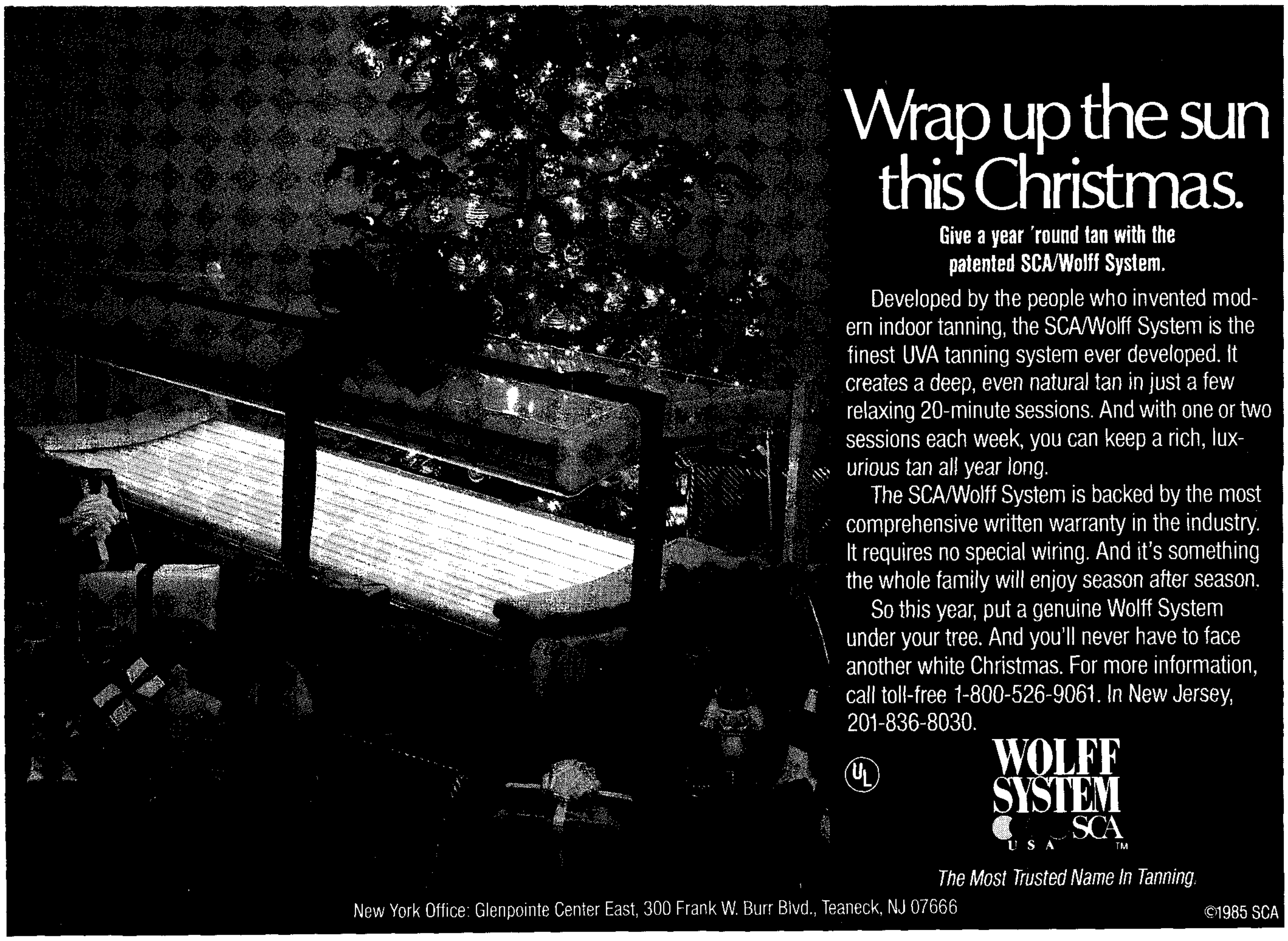
vance by force in all directions at once. He urged Congress to fund covert operations in Angola, adopted the Shah of Iran as a military surrogate in the Middle East, decided to "destabilize" the government of Chile, and was just barely restrained from ordering covert operations against the first democratically elected government in Portugal. Kissinger argued that all these initiatives would have been huge successes if it had not been for Congress and the new cycle of "sulking isolationism" conceived in moralistic terms. Before 1973, he quite understandably preferred to think of the student protests against the continuing slaughter of Indo-Chinese as "moralistic." Less understandably now, he painted Congress's refusal to follow him into Angola as a failure of American will. Did he really believe that? Apparently so. That Congress would question his desire to intervene in Angola or to stake American prestige on an attenuated Oriental despotism in Iran did not strike him as rational—not even in the middle of an economic crisis brought on by deficit spending on the Vietnam War and by the victory of the oil-producing nations in a price war led by the Shah himself. If there was anything new in the Nixon-Kissinger approach to the Third World, it lay in the Nixon Doctrine—the notion that governments of large and (for the moment, at least) friendly countries could be persuaded to provide the troops to defend American interests in their regions. A pale copy of the Truman Doctrine, it promised that through surrogates the United States could intervene everywhere at once. At the same time, it seemed, when announced, to be the *n*th degree of the Achesonian series; it had about it the sense of an ending and a premonition of a new multilateralism.

As it turned out, however, faith in the efficacy of thin-red-line tactics continued unabated in other quarters. A few years later, when the Carter Administration was reeling from the overthrow of the Shah, its Brzezinski wing advocated the creation of a "rapid-deployment force" and prepared to do battle with the Soviets, or their surrogates, in the Persian Gulf and the Horn of Africa. For Brzezinski, as for Kissinger, the Iranian revolution was caused by American guilt over the Vietnam War. But then, instead of the Soviets, Ayatollah Khomeini appeared, and the military units that were sent to rescue the hostages ended up in a sand dune far from Teheran. Diplomacy eventually saved the hostages, but in the United States the very use of diplomacy was understood to be a sign of American weakness, and though the diplomats were alive and at home in the United States, they remained hostages politically. The Reagan Administration, elected at least in part on the issue of American strength, set out to follow the traditional formula for intervention. It constructed a domino theory for Central America, sent military advisers to El Salvador, and backed the Contras against the Nicaraguan government. President Reagan then decided to bolster the Gemayel government in Beirut with eighteen hundred marines. Finally, in October of 1983, Reagan found an enemy—in Grenada—small enough to overcome.

LOOKED at one by one and on their merits, American military initiatives in the Third World over the past twenty years seem to make no sense at all. What were the Marines supposed to do in a country where every young man had a gun? What was the C.I.A. supposed to do in Angola—blow up Gulf Oil installations there? Such pro-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posals would make sense only in relation to a Tolkien vision of the world—a mythical map. On this map there are only two countries with any power: the Soviet Union and the United States. The two are engaged in a global military, economic, and ideological struggle for control over all the rest of the world, and such people as Ho Chi Minh, Ferdinand Marcos, and Yasir Arafat are merely pawns in the great game between the two superpowers. All the hundred and fifty-odd nation-states in the world belong to one side or the other—or they serve as battlefields between the two. This map appeared in some literal detail in American junior-high-school textbooks of the nineteen-fifties—the Communist countries painted black, the non-Communist countries white, and the neutral nations gray. Since then, the map has dropped out of the textbooks, because keeping up with the changing status of Third World countries apparently proved too strenuous a task for the publishers. But in the minds of many Americans, including a number of those in public office, the map has remained largely intact. In political debate, the one question is whether the map describes an ideological reality or merely a geopolitical one.

Where this map came from and why it so appeals to Americans in spite of all we know to the contrary are perhaps the key questions of American foreign policy. The first question is easily answered, for there is a well-marked trail in American intellectual history leading to the prototype. In the eighteen-eighties and nineties, those Protestant theologians who took their stand on Biblical inerrancy read the Books of Daniel and Revelation as a detailed set of prophecies for the events leading up to the return of Christ and the beginning of his thousand-year reign on earth. According to these prophecies, the Beast and the Antichrist would appear and would gather the heathen nations together and assemble a huge army; there would be a period of Tribulations, during which the faith of Christians would be tested, and then a world war between the heathen hordes and Christ's army of saints, culminating in the Battle of Armageddon. The theologians identified Russia as the Biblical land called Ros, where the Beast would appear, and America as the country that would provide the armies of the saints, since America alone contained the saving remnant of Bible-believing Christians.

Premillennialism, the doctrine un-

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dergirding this chiliastic speculation, was in a sense the most otherworldly of theological positions, but since the prophecy was of imminent crisis in the world it became a means of interpreting current politics. In the nineteen-twenties, some fundamentalist preachers saw the Bolshevik revolution as the beginning of the Tribulations; putting socialists at the head of their enemies list (a list that then included Catholicism, Darwinism, and the new Biblical scholarship), they contributed their apocalyptic sense of cultural crisis to the red scare. In the nineteen-fifties, fundamentalists like the Reverend Billy James Hargis, the Reverend Carl McIntire, and Robert Welch translated premillennialist doctrine into a description of the Cold War, and a rationale for the "witch hunts" in the United States. Then, in the nineteen-seventies, Jerry Falwell, James Robison, and others updated the prophecies in order to mount a new crusade. America, Falwell wrote, was "the only logical launching pad for world evangelization." On a trip to Israel, he walked over the prophesied battlefield of Armageddon for the benefit of his television audience. At home, he called for rearmament and warned of the dangers of a Communist invasion from Central America.

Premillennialism is, of course, a minority position, even among evangelical Protestants. But from time to time fundamentalist preachers have had an important influence on the American political debate. Since that influence is far out of proportion to the size of their congregations, they must be striking a responsive chord. To put it another way, elements of premillennialist thinking seem to exist in vague and diffuse form quite generally in the United States. Fundamentalist theology, for example, dictates that God and the Devil are everywhere immanent; thus, politics is not simply the collision of differing self-interests but the expression of a transcendent power struggle between the forces of good and the forces of evil. If the United States is the "Christian nation," then the Soviet Union must be the "evil empire."

While few politicians are actually religious fundamentalists, this kind of thinking, more or less stripped of its theology, appears quite often in foreign-policy discussions. In the first place, there is the spectre of global crisis evoked by American politicians at times when their European counterparts see nothing of the sort. President Nixon's speech at the outset of the

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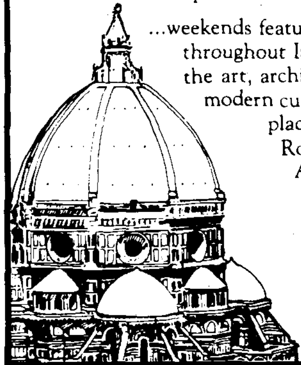

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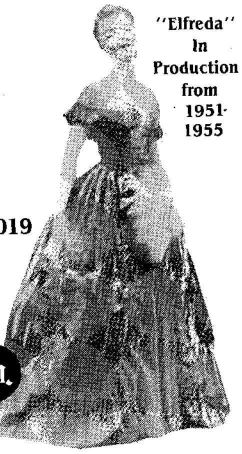

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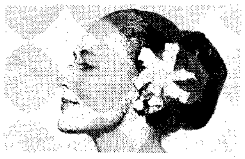

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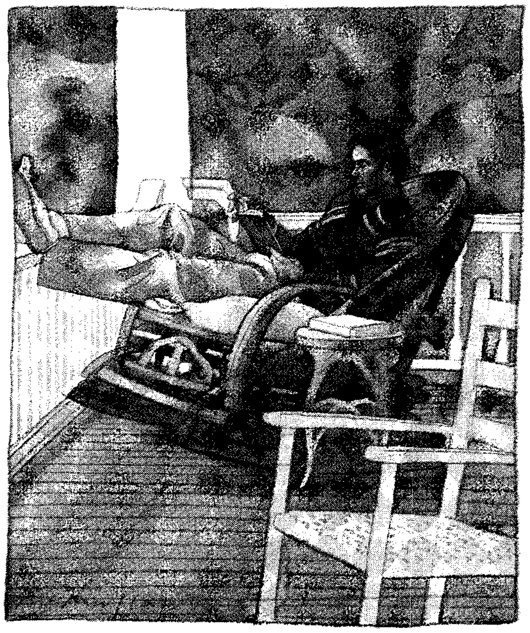
Possibly, Nixon was alone in seeing the Cambodian incursion as an event of global significance. But there have been events more generally recognized as such. The rescue of thirty-nine American sailors from the Mayagüez in May of 1975 (with the loss of fifteen American servicemen) was heralded as a demonstration that the United States had not lost its "credibility" in the world; the successful invasion of Grenada in October of 1983 was seen as evidence that the United States was once again "standing tall;" the recent diversion of an Egyptian plane with four terrorists aboard was viewed as evidence of "a new patriotism alive in our country." For these victories, there would be no cost accounting—no counting the number of Americans who died rescuing the sailors, no calculating the absurd disproportion of the opposing forces in Grenada—for the cost of signs and portents cannot be calculated. On a metaphysical battlefield, taking any action could mean total victory; on the other hand, any faltering could bring total defeat. Thus, the corruption of Greece would lead to the corruption of all Europe and Asia Minor, and the fall of South Vietnam would lead to the fall of all Southeast Asia and of Oceania up to the shores of the United States. In this way of thinking, there are no intermediate redoubts, no compromise positions; it is all or nothing, and always a slippery slope.

This is, of course, Manichaean thinking—an ancient heresy—and the consequence is what Richard Hofstadter has called "the paranoid style in American politics." The logic is that "unlike the rest of us, the enemy is not caught in the toils of the vast mechanism of history, himself a victim of his past, his desires, his limitations," Hofstadter said. "He is a free, active, demonic agent. He wills, indeed he manufactures, the mechanism of history himself." In one of the purest examples of the paranoid style, Senator Joseph McCarthy attributed the defeat of Chiang Kai-shek and the "loss of China" to Communist agents within the State Department. McCar-



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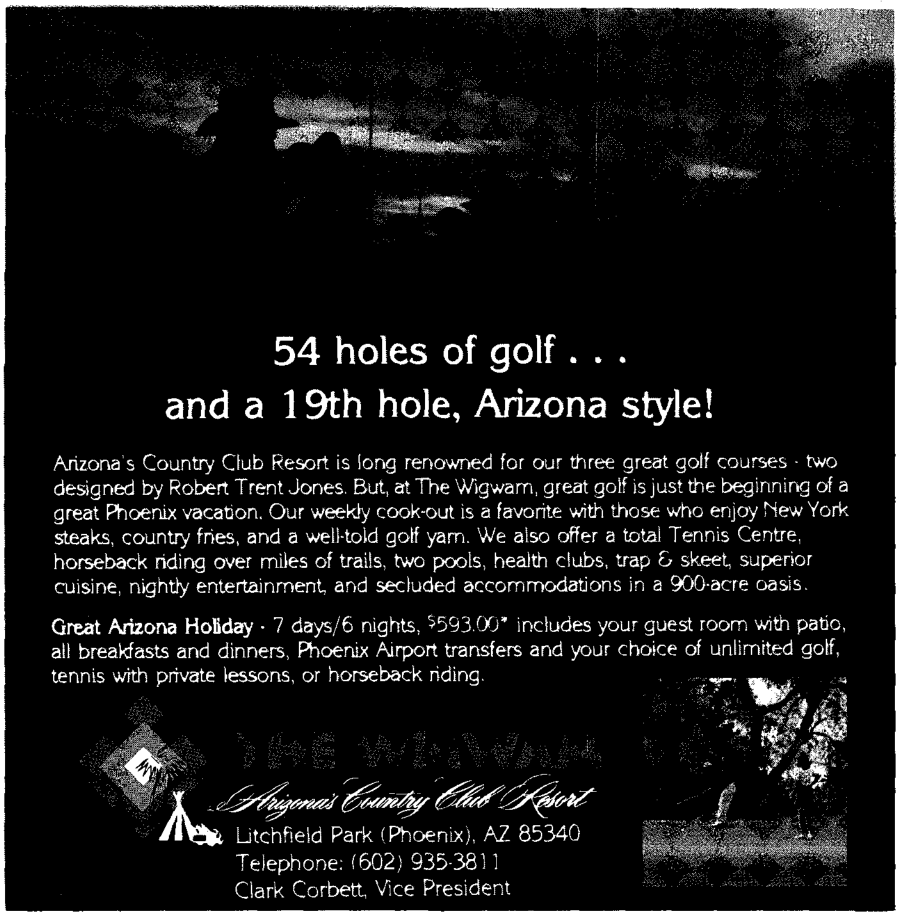

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thy ended as a madman, and his charges now seem risible, but at the time a great many respectable people involved in "the China lobby" proposed a modified version of the same thing; namely, that the United States had the power to reverse the Chinese revolution, and that the responsibility for that revolution lay with the Soviets, not with the Chinese. And examples of the paranoid style abound in the nineteen-eighties. In March of 1981, President Reagan described American military aid to the government of El Salvador in this fashion:

> What we're doing . . . is [to] try to halt the infiltration into the Americas by terrorists, by outside interference and those who aren't just aiming at El Salvador but, I think, are aiming at the whole of Central and possibly later South America—and, I'm sure, eventually North America. But this is what we're doing, is trying to stop this destabilizing force of terrorism and guerrilla warfare and revolution from being exported in here, backed by the Soviet Union and Cuba and those others that we've named.

Two years later, the President revealed to a joint session of Congress the probable consequences of inaction in Central America:

> If we cannot defend ourselves there, we cannot expect to prevail elsewhere. Our credibility would collapse, our alliances would crumble, and the safety of our homeland would be put in jeopardy.

Some secular thinking has gone into the popular debate on American foreign policy, but until recently the main alternative to the Manichaean world view was another mode of millennial thinking, which one might call Gnostic (for its brother heresy). This mode, too, can be traced to nineteenth-century Protestant theology, but in this case to the more optimistic doctrines of transcendentalism, perfectionism, and the social gospel. Theologians of the social gospel, for example, believed that evil was a temporary phenomenon and that human nature was not merely perfectible but would actually soon be perfected, as a result of the swiftness of moral evolution in the United States. The social gospel was as much a minority position as premillennialism among Protestants, but the general strain of thinking was quite widespread. Woodrow Wilson went to the Versailles Peace Conference with the Gnostic vision that the United States could bring peace, freedom, and justice to the world by an act of will. During and after the Second World War, it was this vision that filled the rhetorical sails of a great many public figures, from Roosevelt and Wendell Willkie

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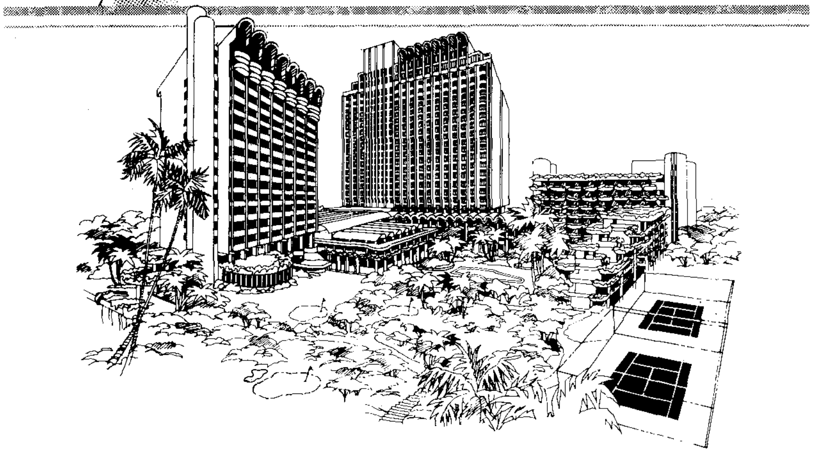

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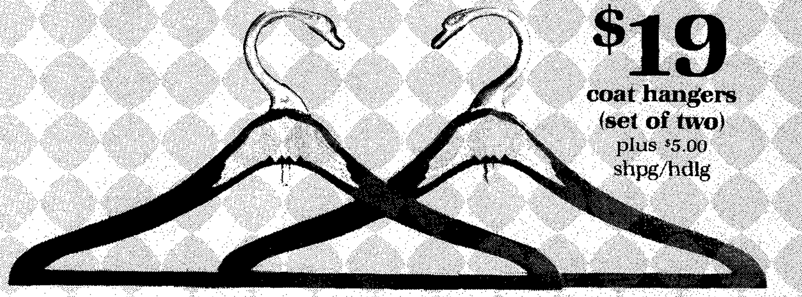

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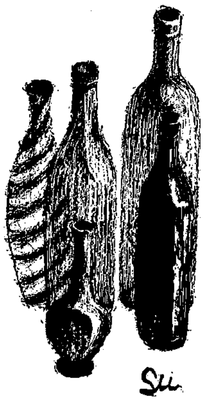
to Henry Luce. Since then, this mode of thinking has been well represented in American-history textbooks for young students and in political speeches—mostly, but not exclusively, by liberals. (Hubert Humphrey is the best example of the liberal Gnostic.)

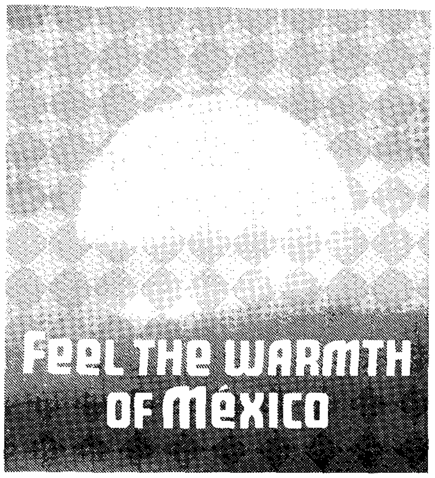
The Gnostic vision is much more confident and generous than the Manichaean world view. But it contains what Reinhold Niebuhr pointed to as the dubious (and unchristian) proposition that Americans act without taint of self-interest or self-love. The notion that Americans act disinterestedly, whereas others act only out of self-interest (and therefore have no legitimate point of view), is, of course, American exceptionalism and the American imperial vision. Used to justify territorial acquisitions in the nineteenth century, it has on occasion cropped up as justification for American military undertakings in the twentieth.

In 1965, President Johnson pledged not only to prevent another Munich in Southeast Asia but also to bring peace, material progress, and human dignity to the Vietnamese. "The American people have helped generously in times past in these works," he said. "Now there must be a much more massive effort to improve the life of man in that conflict-torn corner of our world." These promises proved extremely troublesome: they laid Johnson open to the charge of hypocrisy, and their logic permitted elements within the peace movement to conclude that if the United States did not represent absolute good it must represent absolute evil.

Gnostic rhetoric has also been used by politicians in support of a great many peaceful and generally positive undertakings in American foreign policy—notably in support of the United Nations in its early days. Here, too, it has tended to backfire—though with a different result. In the case of the United Nations, it turned Americans against the organization as soon as members from the Third World began to disagree with the United States, the logic being that if those countries were not America's loyal friends they must be enemies. In the mid-seventies, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, then Nixon's Ambassador to the United Nations, made several speeches deploring the decline of Western civilization under the pressure of totalitarianism and barbarism in the Third World. The United Nations, he said, consisted almost exclusively of Communist regimes and "ancient and modern despotisms," all of which were united in their "conviction that their success ultimately depends on our failure." The speeches were widely acclaimed, and at around the same time large numbers of Americans confided to poll-takers that they had "lost interest" in the rest of the world. Gnostic thinking has also, and most unfortunately, infected the debate over nuclear weapons, leading some in the peace movement to conclude that deterrence is unnecessary, and that the only obstacle to world peace is insanity in Washington. Kissinger was surely right when he said that it was difficult to find a constituency for the proposition that "we had to collaborate with our adversary while resisting him." The Manichaeans would not accept it, but no more would the Gnostics.



Given American intellectual history, it is in a sense not at all surprising that Americans should think about foreign policy in religious terms. Every major social movement in American history, including feminism and civil rights, came initially out of the churches; the first and second Great Awakenings preceded the American Revolution and the Civil War. Religious revivals are what the United States seems to have instead of revolutions; it is a land of prophets, not of philosophers. Clergymen of all denominations inject themselves into the political debate in a way that would be inconceivable in Europe, and Americans continue to convince the poll-takers that theirs is the most God-fearing society in the Western world. But there are various kinds of religious thinking. When groups like the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and the National Council of Churches and the Southern Baptist Convention enter the debate directly, they offer moral reasoning, sometimes of a high order. But the kind of thinking that has governed the foreign-policy debate has not been moral so much as eschatological, and its theology is the nineteenth-century brand. That millennial thinking should exist within one of the most technologically advanced of nations is perhaps not remarkable. What is remarkable is that it exists in a society that has proved extraordinarily



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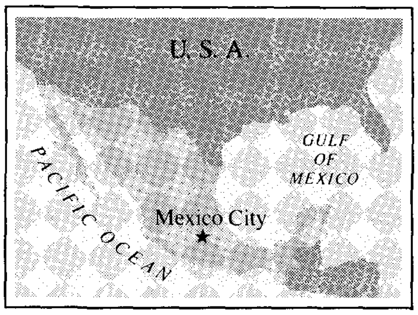

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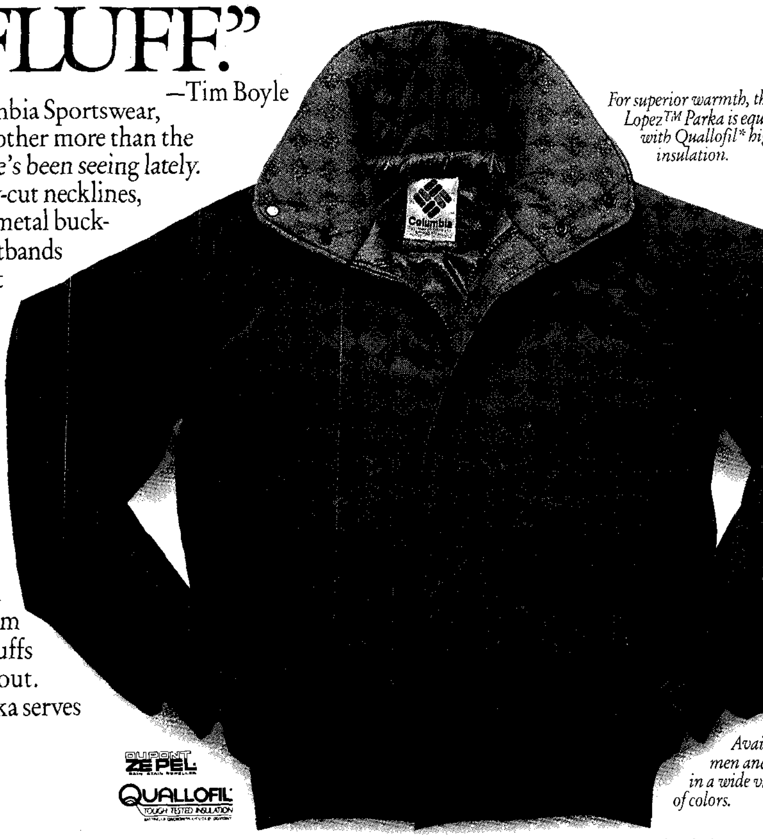
good at governing itself by compromise and consensus—a society whose domestic politics are ordinarily nonideological and consist instead of appeasing, coöpting, and otherwise dealing with a vast number of self-acknowledged interest groups.

There is a historical explanation for the persistence of this millennial thinking; there is also a psychological one. For most of the nineteenth century, Europe and Asia were so distant from the United States as to belong to the realm of the imagination for most Americans. At that distance, Americans could conceive of the nation itself as the New World—a model for mankind, the City Upon a Hill. After the War of 1812, the policy of nonalignment was entirely successful: not only did it keep the United States out of European wars but it also permitted westward expansion to proceed apace. Americans could thus continue to believe that the United States was different from the European nations in its international behavior and would eternally remain so.

Because to the south and the west there were only Indian tribes and colonies (or former colonies) of Catholic Spain, Protestants saw national expansion as identical with the missionary enterprise. At the end of the century, President McKinley told a group of his Methodist brethren that he favored annexation of the Philippines because it was the American duty to "uplift and civilize and Christianize" the Filipinos. This evangelical mission was not just the substance of American policy; for many, it was the spirit of the nation itself. Who could dispute that the nation had a God-given mission, a Manifest Destiny? The proof was its extraordinary success. No military defeat ever forced Americans to reconsider, or to disentangle their religious visions from their view of the nation in the world. The great and sobering disaster for the nation was domestic—the Civil War. After it, an agreement to disagree came to seem vital to national survival. In 1877, few voters complained of the cynical political deal that ended Reconstruction; it was seen as a necessity, a fact of life. Abroad, however, such necessities never arose, and there Americans could continue to believe that their nation had a higher calling and the grace to do God's will.

Neither the First World War nor the Second gave Americans much reason to question the exceptional nature of the United States. On the contrary, both seemed to confirm it, and the Second in particular. Hitler, after all, was as demonic as any figure in history, and Fascism (as was discovered later) had loosed an almost metaphysical evil in its true believers; Stalinism seemed its successor. But while the war laid waste every other industrialized country, it released huge energies in the United States, both human and technological. The atomic bomb and American prosperity seemed to lift the country out of the realm of necessity. Its power seemed limitless. "Present at the Creation" is the title that Dean Acheson gave his memoirs of the postwar period. He was the son of a clergyman; so was John Foster Dulles.

As Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger never quite got around to educating the American public in "the complexity of the world we would have to manage," and persuading it to abandon "the simpler verities of an earlier age." Jimmy Carter, however, put a good deal of effort during his term in office into describing the complexities of the world as he saw it. The world, he said in effect, is a very complicated place. It is very small and



"MOTHER'S NEVER BEEN ONE FOR URBAN FLUFF."
—Tim Boyle

As president of Columbia Sportswear, nothing infuriates my mother more than the designer outdoorwear she's been seeing lately. So-called parkas with low-cut necklines, 3/4-length sleeves, heavy metal buckles, and loose-fitting waistbands are absurd from her point of view. Not that she's opposed to high fashion. It's just that in her experience, it's best to let style follow function rather than dictate it.

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very crowded, and nations have become interdependent; what Americans do affects others, and yet Americans cannot always get what they want by unilateral action. This was no Gnostic vision, nor was it a bipolar "global balance" vision of the sort that accorded so well with the Manichaean world view.

Carter's explanations, however, combined with a demonstration that he was more or less right—the hostage crisis in Iran—went over very badly with the American electorate. The traditional map of the world, as presented by Ronald Reagan, proved much more attractive. It had the virtue of simplicity. While it held certain terrors, such as subversion in the hemisphere, it was reassuringly familiar and not so claustrophobic. In Reagan's world, Americans could afford to pay no attention to gloomy matters like overpopulation, nuclear proliferation, and the spread of deserts. They could forget whole continents for years at a time. On the other hand, if foreign governments were abusive or ungrateful, Americans could be abusive back without guilt or fear of consequences. Most important, perhaps, there was an aesthetic to Reagan's world. Instead of a chaotic mess, there was a story line, a single sweeping arc of narrative that bound all events together and made sense of them. Even if the story was not true in every particular, even if it left out the subplots appearing daily in the newspapers, it was surely better than no story at all.

In the 1984 election, Walter Mondale did not dispute this. Unable to summon up the Gnostic vision—for where were the victories?—he told a watered-down version of the same story. The polls showed the public supporting him over Reagan on specific issues of foreign affairs. Perhaps it is that Americans respond to polltakers' questions with the "right" answers, as they would on intelligence tests, and then act as they please. The question left for the next election is what any candidate can say about foreign affairs that will get him elected and at the same time be true. This question, bizarre as it is, may be as profound as any in American political history. —FRANCES FITZGERALD

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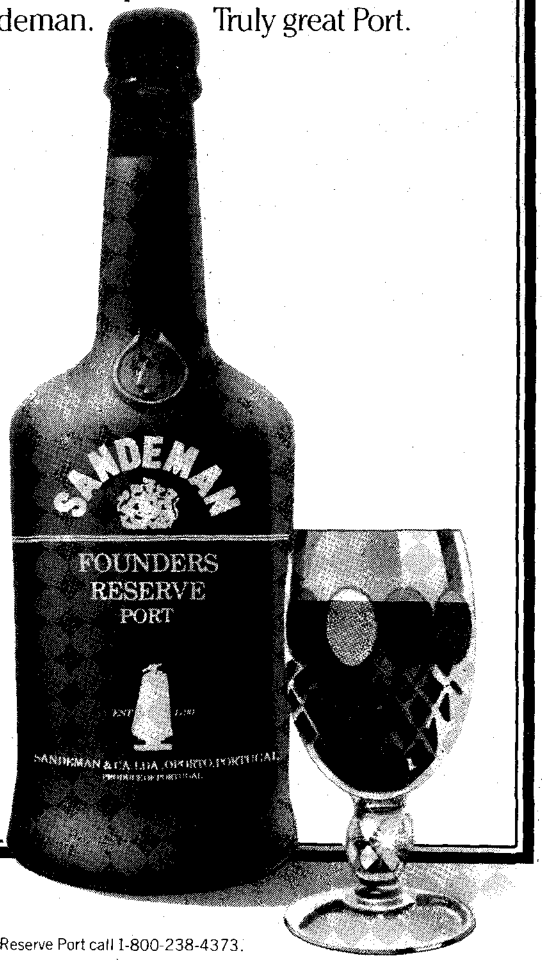

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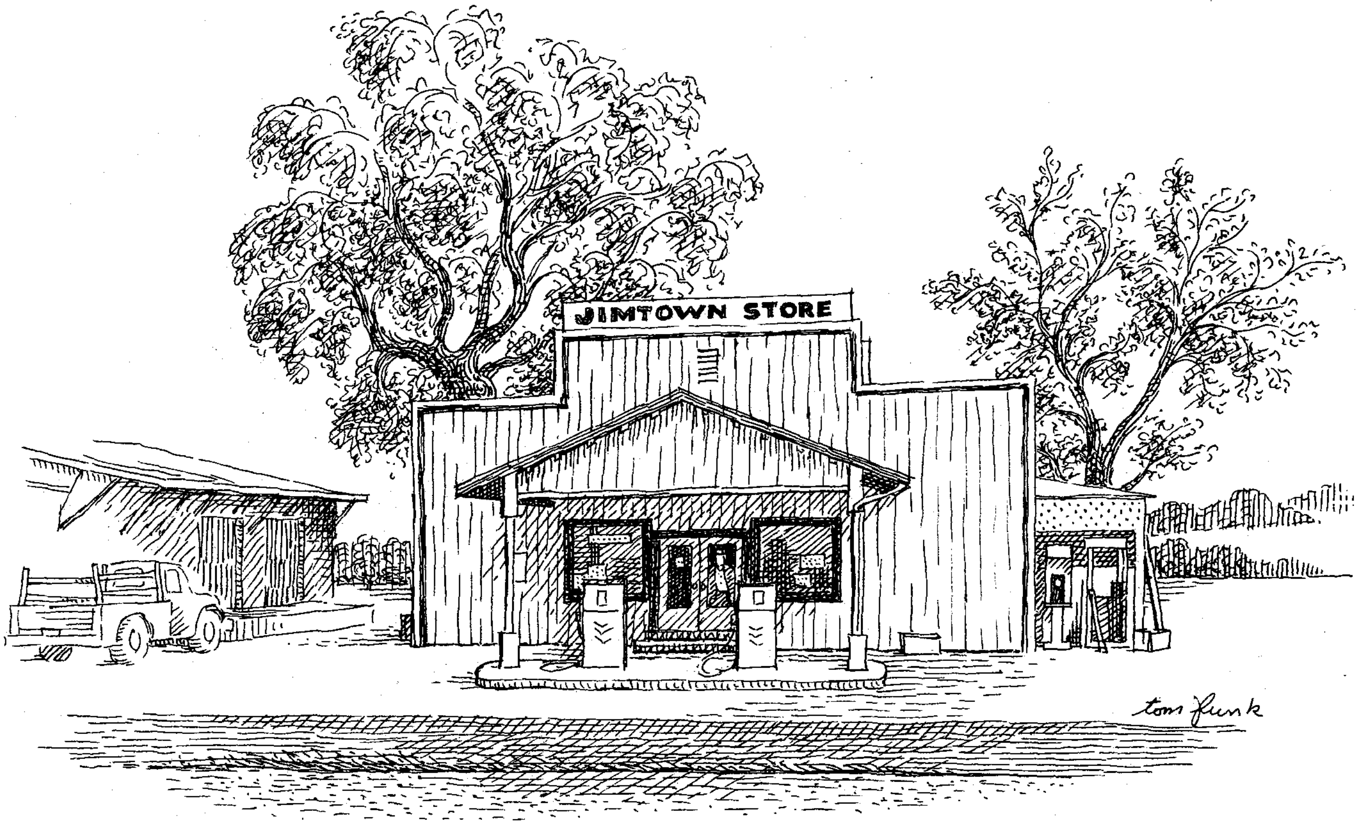
A REPORTER AT LARGE

THE JIMTOWN STORE



I WAS watching Caroline Goodyear repair a hole in a bag of Purina Cat Chow. A Mexican farm worker, who was a regular customer at Goodyear's Jimtown Store, had dropped it accidentally, and he watched, too. Caroline was thorough. She added layer after layer of tape, testing the bag with a finger to make sure that none of the little nutrient pellets inside could escape. It was tempting to think that she was motivated by her well-known and abundantly evident love of cats—at least ten strays were nosing around in the grass outside, waiting for a meal—but I'd been hanging around for a few days myself, and I knew that she treated human beings just as generously. Short and sturdily built, with broad shoulders and graying hair, she projected the kind of warmth that's usually associated, in the mythology of general stores, with cast-iron stoves.

Pleased with the tape job, she smiled and patted the bag. Her eyes got big and round, magnified behind her round glasses. "*Esto es todo?*" she asked.

The farm worker had been out in the fields since first light, doing some pruning at one of the many vineyards in the Alexander Valley of California. He wore a pair of faded jeans, a flannel shirt, and a baseball cap. The seasonal rains had come early that November, and his rubber boots were muddy from tramping about. His face was tanned and weathered, caught in an expression that was half playful and half intent. He was not unamused by the panoply of American goods on display. He lifted his head and took in the mops and fan belts, the placards of fishing lures and Dr. Grabow's corncob pipes, the toy dart pistols and toy nurse kits.

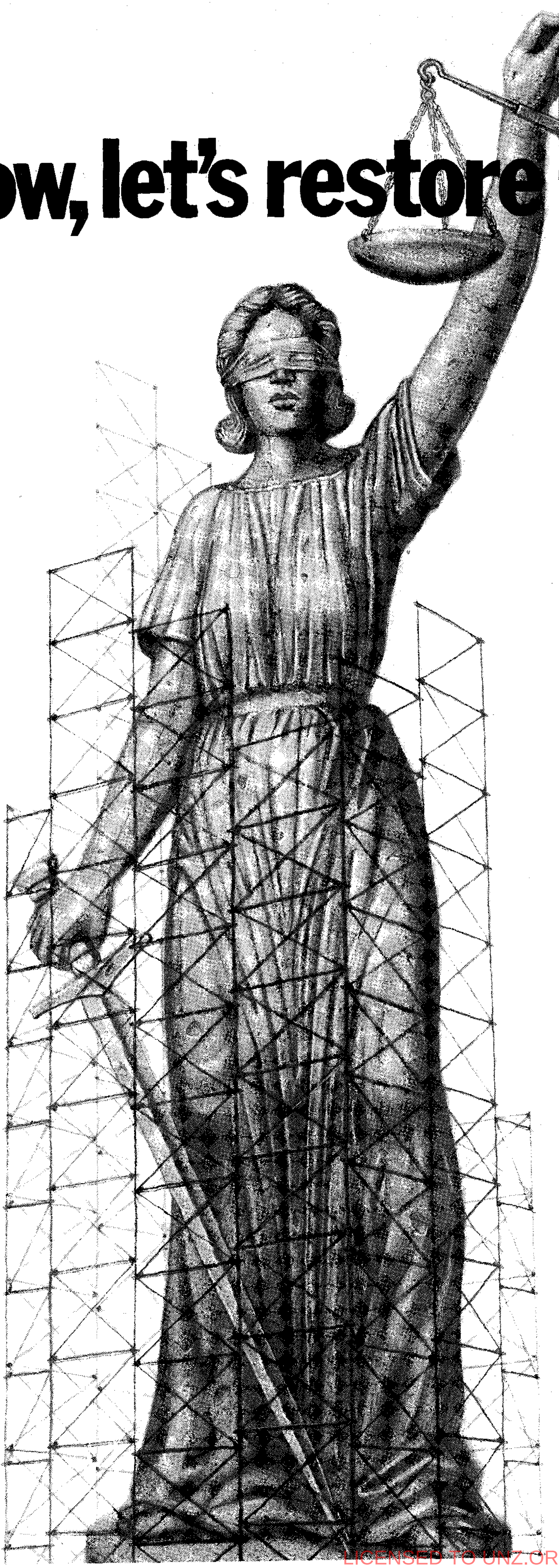
"No, Caroline," he said finally. "Budweiser."

This was enough to give Caroline pause. She sold so much Budweiser that she sometimes felt as if she and her husband, Robert, were annexed to Anheuser-Busch, yoked into harness with the famous Clydesdales. Bud was a particular favorite of farm workers, who provided about seventy-five per cent of the Goodyears' trade. They were an extremely brand-loyal crew, and they were also devoted to Marlboros, Kraft cheddar cheese, and La Luna tortillas ("If it's not from the Moon, it is no good"), which were packaged in San Francisco.

I chatted with Caroline while her customer was at the cooler, muscling aside the Coors and the Olympia. Having put in years behind the counter, she was a veteran in the art of small talk. Like barbers and bartenders, she was privy to secrets and had access to all the juiciest valley gossip, which she parted with reluctantly, as blind items, naming no names. Her days were filled with friendly interchanges that gave meaning and texture to her life, and lately she'd been wondering what she was going to do with herself after she and Bob retired, at the end of the year.

The Goodyears were both past sixty and ready to retire, but they were at odds about what to do with their store. They'd been trying to sell it for almost eight months. They'd put it on the market in March of 1984, listing it exclusively with a real-estate agent in Healdsburg, at an asking price of eight hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars. That included an acre and a half of ground, some outbuildings, and two duplex rental units. They had hoped things would go quickly, but they'd had trouble finding a buyer, and Bob had recently got fed up with the entire affair. He believed that if he

Now, let's restore Civil Justice.



Year after year, our civil justice system has become slower. More costly. Less fair to the very people it was meant to help.

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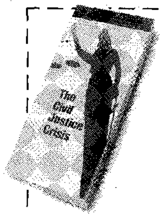

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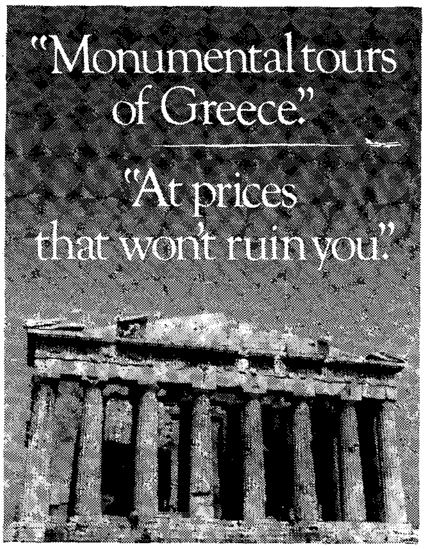
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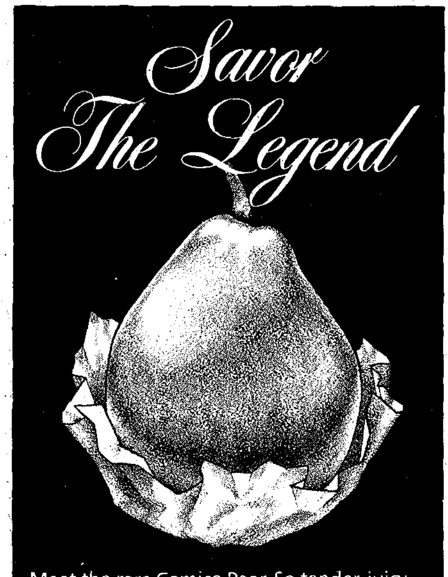

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didn't do something soon they'd never be free of their obligations, so, over Caroline's protests, he'd announced that he was closing on December 31st—sale or no sale. This had caused a flap in the valley, because the store served its customers in many different and probably irreplaceable ways.

The farm worker returned with a Budweiser twelve-pack and set it next to the Cat Chow. He was satisfied now, bouncing up and down on the balls of his feet. He didn't hand over any money for his purchases. Instead, Caroline totted up what he owed, and put it on his tab, which was filed, with many other tabs, in a Payday Salted Nut Bar box behind the counter.

"*Gracias*, Caroline," he said. "*Y adiós*."

He picked up his groceries and left with a friend, who had a run-down Chevy parked outside. They cruised by a pair of Chevron gasoline pumps in front of the store, narrowly avoiding contact, and turned onto Highway 128, a busy road that cuts through the middle of the Alexander Valley. The valley lies about sixty-five miles north of San Francisco, in Sonoma County, an area that was once largely agricultural but is gradually becoming a familiar suburban sprawl of tract houses, shopping malls, and light industry. None of the development has reached the valley yet, because strict zoning laws protect its rural character. Even in winter, a fallow time of year, the vineyards around the store were full of color. They offered a spectrum of earth tones—browns, rusts, umbers, and siennas. There was wild mustard topped with delicate yellow flowers among the vineyard rows.

"IT'S chilly, you know?" Caroline said, buttoning up a knobbly blue sweater.

I knew. The only source of heat was an old forced-air blower, and I'd been edging toward it all morning. I had once lived in the valley for five years, but I'd forgotten how cold it could be. I'd grown attached to the store back then, and had stopped in almost daily for beer or milk or bread. It had a homey quality that I appreciated. The exterior was plain white clapboard, and the plank floors inside were oiled and burnished to a rich mahogany. The walls were panelled with knotty pine, and on rainy days, when storms blew in from the Pacific, the store felt as cozy as a fishing cabin. There were all kinds of things on the shelves. Jack-Master knives. Gold Bond bottlecaps. Votive candles of the Sacred Heart.

"Excuse me, please."

I stepped out of the way, so that Mary Martinez, Caroline's assistant, could roll past some cases of soft drinks she'd stacked on a dolly. She was nineteen, pretty, and strong. She lived around the corner, on Red Winery Road, and when shy neighborhood boys stopped in for a sandwich they often stayed awhile to talk to her. They said things like "Way you made this sandwich, Mary, I ought to get it for free," acting goofy in the presence of potential heartbreak.

When Mary had finished hefting Pepsi and Coke into the cooler, she unbundled some magazines and started arranging them on the magazine rack. She dawdled for a few moments over a scandal-sheet headline that said "BURT WILL MARRY LONI."

"I doubt this is true," she said to me. "You think it's true?"

"I think he should have stayed with Sally Field."

"That's what I think, too."

The door opened again, fanning us with a gust of wind, and another farm worker came in. He asked to buy a twenty-five-dollar money order to send home to his family, in Mexico. Customers, both Anglo and Hispanic, commonly used the store as a bank. Many of them were poor and couldn't afford the punitive service charges that real banks tacked on to the accounts of small depositors. Then, too, some of the workers had papers that weren't exactly in order, and they tended to stay away from any institution that might require them to produce a green card.

Caroline took a Travelers Express Money Order blank from a drawer. As she filled it out, she carried on a conversation with the worker, in fluent Spanish. The language came easily to her, because she was born in Italy and hadn't emigrated to the United States until 1929, when she was eight years old. She didn't know a word of English then, so she understood how difficult it was for uneducated Mexicans to function in an utterly foreign land. Those who were settled legally in the valley brought their driver's-license applications and income-tax forms to her, and she helped them to decipher the materials. This was one of the things that worried her about closing the store. She didn't think there was anybody around to pick up the slack.

Caroline collected cash for the money order, plus a seventy-five-cent

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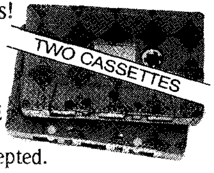

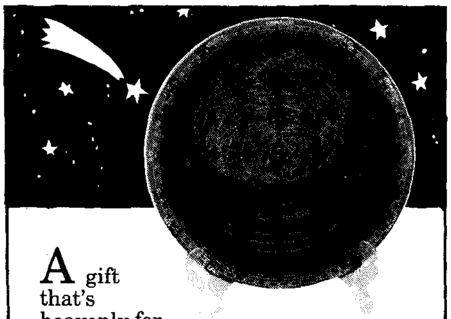

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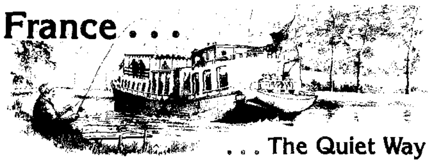

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commission. The farm worker left, and the store fell suddenly silent. I'd been noticing these silences throughout the morning. They provided a break from routine, during which the people working in the store slowed down for a minute or two and caught their breath. You heard clocks ticking, leaves rustling, finches singing in the live-oak trees.

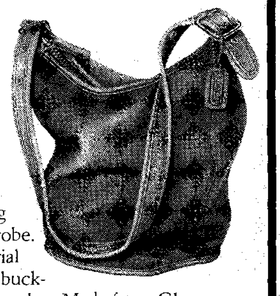
I saw a late-model Honda park by the gas pumps, and Carole Rodriguez, the Goodyears' older daughter, walked into the store carrying an AM-FM stereo tape recorder. She was in her early thirties, and she moved and talked at a speedy pace. She was dressed for the fast lane, in bluejeans, a velours top, and a fancy print scarf. Simultaneously, she lit a long brown cigarette and climbed onto a chair behind the deli case, so she could put the boombox on the ledge. Anne Murray was halfway through a country ballad involving tears.

Carole was married and had a part-time job with the post office, but she'd agreed to help out at the store through December. She had worked with her parents ever since she was a child.

"I watched your soap opera for you yesterday," Caroline said to her. She was sorting through some envelopes. Carole still got some mail at the store, and so did a few customers who lacked fixed addresses.

Caroline's soap was "Another World." Carole's was "Days of Our Lives." Certain details of plot and subplot were exchanged.

There was a letter for Carole from a friend who'd moved to Oregon. While she read it, keeping an eye on the register, I went with Caroline to a kitchen at the back of the store and sat around while she watered her plants. The kitchen had lots of windows, and through them we could see the Goodyears' house. It was a simple frame place that fronted right on the highway. Over the decades, it had been added to and subtracted from, so that it had become less a statement of architectural intent than a record of its owners' needs and desires. Caroline told me that sometimes now she looked at the house and tried to imagine herself inside it in, say, January. She tried to imagine what it would be like not to have to get up in the morning, and she wasn't having much luck. The Goodyears had just invested in a satellite antenna that brought them dozens of new TV programs, but she had no interest in putting in more time before the tube. She watched it too much



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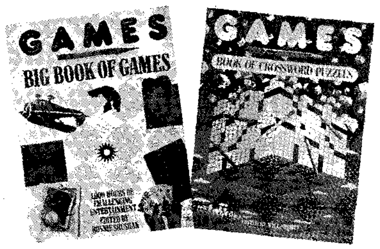

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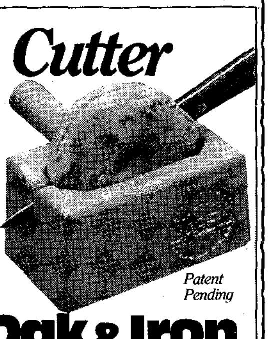

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already, she said. TV was nothing, really, compared with people.

Bob Goodyear got back from a trip to Healdsburg around eleven o'clock. He had done some banking, had visited his ninety-three-year-old mother, and had picked up essentials that weren't delivered to the store, such as fresh bread and newspapers. In his denims and black work shoes, he resembled an Iowa farmer. He was a wiry, intelligent man, and he walked with a slight limp, which was due partly to a childhood bout of polio and partly to a recent spill in which he had broken his left—formerly good—leg. He had a roughed-up face that showed the effects of having to deal with low-level doses of chronic pain. I'd figured him for a hard case the first time I met him, but he was just tight-lipped, keeping his emotions under wraps. If he liked you, you had a friend for life.

He invited me to his office, so we could have a talk about the business. It was a room with a low ceiling, adjacent to the kitchen. Odd, singular, and probably unsalable items had gravitated to it—a skateboard, a Teddy bear in a plastic sack. There were many mementos and considerable dust. Bob gave me a wooden milk box to sit on. He sat in the only chair, at a desk that was hemmed in by a generation's worth of Payday Salted Nut Bar boxes. The desk was covered with papers.

"Cigarette?" he asked, sliding a pack of Belairs toward me. He wore glasses and had a barely visible mustache.

He thumbed through the papers on his desk and told me he had an enormous amount of bookkeeping to do every day, adding up receipts, preparing deposit slips, and making certain that checks were properly endorsed. The farm workers were an honest bunch, but occasionally one might forget which identity he was using, and sign Aurelio Gomez, say, instead of Aurelio Sanchez. That was the sort of mistake Bob was on the lookout for, but, frankly, he'd had enough of it. His family had been in general merchandise for almost three-quarters of a century, and he didn't care if he never saw another bill of lading. His bones ached, and his health was only fair. He was ready to do a little fishing.

"I'm tired of burning the midnight oil," he said.

"What about your customers? What'll they do?"

"It'll be tough on some of them, I'll grant you that." He meant the ones who were unlikely to get credit at another store, the ones who had no bank accounts or phones or fixed addresses. "It can't be helped, though. We've got to draw the line somewhere. Caroline wants me to lease the store to somebody until it's sold. Well, I can't do that. She needs to retire as much as I do. If I lease the store, we'll be slaves to the son of a bitch forever."

I asked him how his trade had changed over the years, and he said that most customers used the store for convenience shopping now. They bought stuff they'd forgotten to buy elsewhere, 7-Eleven-type stuff, but when it was time to fill the grocery basket they took off for the supermarkets of Healdsburg. Bob thought they did this so they'd have a chance to gossip, but he conceded that he couldn't keep up with competitive pricing. Supermarkets really hurt him with their advertised loss leaders.

In the old days, prunes were the main cash crop in the Alexander Valley, followed by apples and pears and hops. Land was still relatively cheap, and there were plenty of small family farms and ranches whose owners shopped in Jimtown. The valley was a more distinct community, more populous and diverse. But in the nineteen-sixties the California wine industry went into a boom cycle, and the price of grapes skyrocketed. Many valley small-timers took the opportunity to sell out, at a good profit, to wealthy individuals and corporations that wanted to plant vineyards. These new owners were often absentees. They hired local vineyard managers to run their operations, cutting them in for a share of the take. In turn, the vineyard managers hired Mexicans to do the strenuous, labor-intensive field work that others wouldn't do. Some of the Mexicans settled in the valley, and they preferred to shop close by, at Goodyear's, where they were welcomed.

"You want to know how nationals are about paying their bills?" Bob asked. "As good as—if not better than—a hell of a lot of white people."

Credit was just part of the game. It was one of the inducements a general store had to offer. Sure, you got burned sometimes, but people bounced checks at Safeway, too.

There were other changes as well, Bob said. Take the flow of business. It used to be fairly steady from month to month, but now it fluctuated wildly. You could count on a fourfold increase

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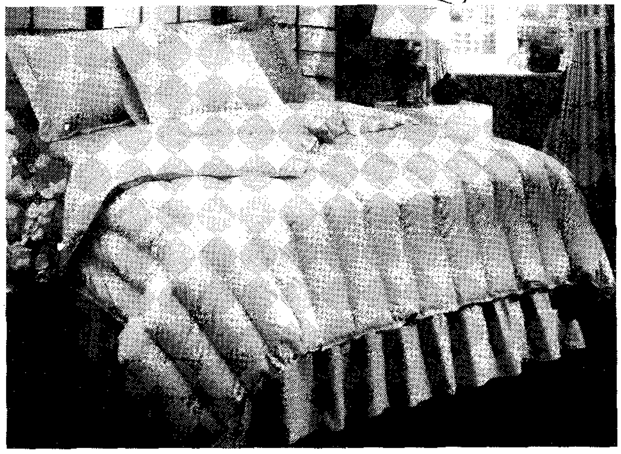

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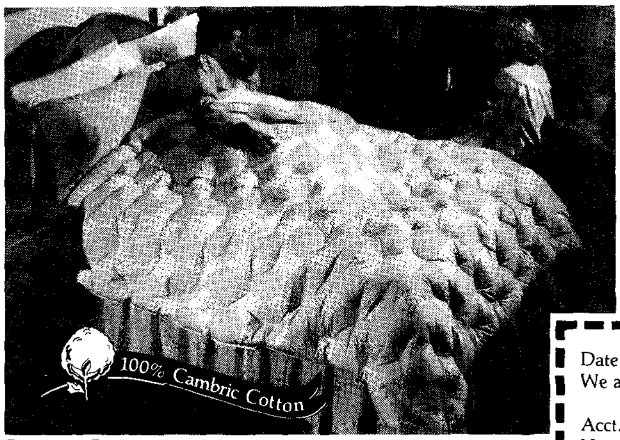

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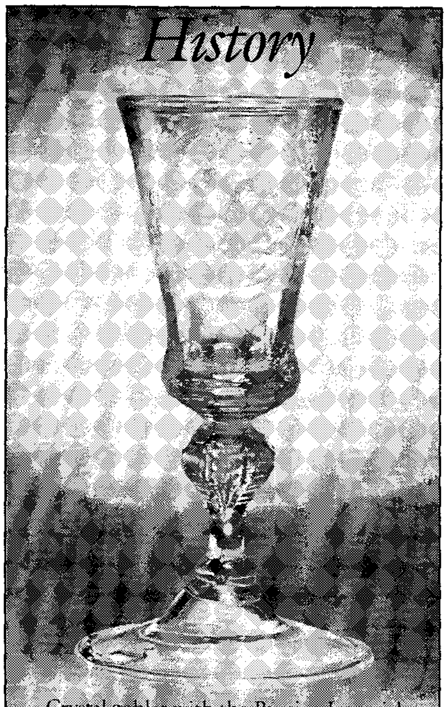
during the harvest, when the entrepreneurs who were called coyotes brought hundreds of illegals across the border and into Sonoma County. During the summer, when a campground opened by the Alexander Valley bridge, on the Russian River, and tourists drove up from San Francisco to visit wineries, it tripled. In winter, it was dead slow.

"Look at this here," Bob said. He passed me an inventory sheet of canned goods he had bought from a wholesaler. The pages were dense with numbers and type. "Wholesaler, he doesn't bother to send around a salesman anymore. I have to do an inventory two, three times a week. Pappy took one look at this, threw up his hands, and said, 'Bob, she's all yours.' "

Pappy was Lloyd S. Goodyear, patriarch and founder, who was born in 1891 and died in 1976. As a young man, he came down to Santa Rosa from Oregon to attend Sweet's Business College, where his sister was married to the Dean. Sweet's was famous then, known for producing graduates who had the most elegant handwriting around. Lloyd got his diploma and took a job with the Exchange Bank of Santa Rosa, but he wasn't cut out to be a nine-to-fiver, and he quit when his doctor told him the cement floors were going to ruin his health. He bought his first store in 1917, out in Dry Creek Valley, west of Healdsburg. That same year, he married Lydia Stack, of San Francisco, on Christmas Day, and they soon had two sons—Bob and his younger brother, Gerald, who currently has a feed business nearby.

In Honoria Tuomey's "History of Sonoma County," Lloyd Goodyear is described as having a "strong social nature," and, true to it, he played poker once a week with a group of friends, including Charlie Peavler, a merchant who owned a general store in the Alexander Valley. When Charlie passed on, in 1930, his wife offered the store to Lloyd, and Lloyd bought it, and leased his own Dry Creek store to a third party after running both establishments for five years. In the valley, he had direct competition from James Patrick, who'd set up shop there in 1893 on an acre of land that became known as Jimtown. Patrick was old and arthritic by then, and he would sit in a rocker on the porch all day, shouting insults at Dan Harrington, a blacksmith who had a shop across the road. Their feud was ancient, and they liked to accuse each other of having Indian blood.



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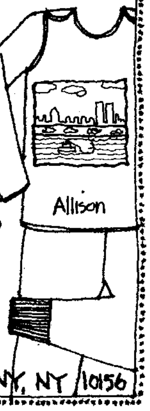

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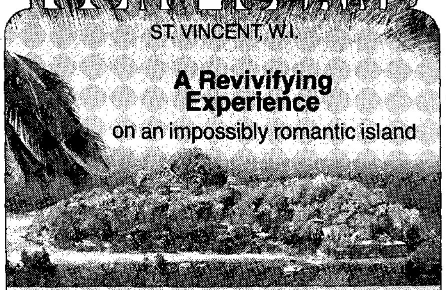

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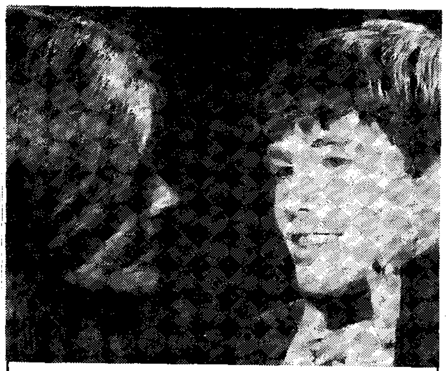

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"You squawman you!" Patrick would shout.

"Squawman yourself!" Harrington would shout back.

Jim Patrick proved to be less of a problem for the Goodyears than paying rent on the land. In time, Lloyd got tired of sending money to his landlords, the Alexander family—these Alexanders were direct descendants of Cyrus Alexander, for whom the valley was named—and eventually Lloyd moved his operation to its present site. He fell into a state of semi-retirement in 1957, during which he pursued collateral interests in cards, horse racing, and good whiskey. He made it a point to go to town every day for a shave, and sometimes he didn't return until evening.

"Pappy loved those town runs," Bob said.

WE were interrupted by a phone call from Kenny, at the produce store in Healdsburg. Bob took it in the kitchen. Kenny had a customer who was looking for a can of Libby's pumpkin that had a recipe for pie on the label, and he wanted to know if Bob had one in stock.

While Bob was talking, Carole came into the kitchen. She didn't have a lot to do around the store, but she still wasn't enjoying herself. She was upset about the potential sale and angry with her father for a number of rational, semi-rational, and irrational reasons. They were at a time-honored impasse in father-daughter affairs. I could see much of his face in hers.

Carole was dragging behind her a youngish blond man who had a pocketful of ballpoint pens and the polite but earnest demeanor of somebody who's seriously thinking about a career in sales.

"Royal Crown guy is here," she said. "You want him to fill in?"

Bob hung up the phone. He was on the verge of losing his temper. "You know we're closing," he said heatedly. "I'm already backed up on R.C. I've got cases and cases of Orange Crush, too, and I don't know what I'm going to do with them."

"We could always pour in some vodka and have a party," Carole said.

Bob wasn't having any. He frowned. The R.C. guy said, "Well, good luck," and took his leave.

Bob and I walked through a side door and into the yard behind the store. In the yard, there was a dilapidated barn with a peaked roof. There were also the two cottagelike duplex units Bob had built. The Goodyears'

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son, Robert, who was thirty, lived in one of them. His twin sister, Roberta, lived in Cloverdale, near Carole, and worked for Pacific Gas & Electric. Although the children were all close by, Bob thought that they had no real interest in taking over the store. "They're busy doing their own thing," he had told a local newspaper reporter.

He led me to the side of the barn, where there were some aluminum bins. "This was my worm farm," he said, leaning an elbow on a bin. "We packed fifty worms to the carton and had twenty-two outlets. I had to keep a light on all night, so the worms would think the sun was shining and wouldn't try to get away. In case the electricity went off, I had an auxiliary line run to my car battery. The kids used to do the packing, but when they got tired of it I let it go. Way they package worms now is by weight. They use an electronic scale. You get a lot of what we call clingers." He held two fingers about half an inch apart. "Little things. Worthless for bait."

We walked to the haymart. It was a big rectangular building with a tin roof and a loading dock for trucks. Bob sold feed and other agricultural products out of it. Bits of straw and hay were scattered around inside, and there was a smell of animals. Among some cardboard boxes stored in a corner Bob found a Libby's carton, and in it, sure enough, was a can of pumpkin with a recipe on the label. This made him happy, suggesting, as it did, that his house was in order, and he rested for a minute.

"We opened this haymart in '51," he said, looking around. "Had a big party. See that wooden platform over there? That's where we put my band. We had kegs of beer and everything, but there were no fights, and nobody caused any trouble."

It must be true that there's no end to the deceptive nature of appearances. Bob didn't look anything like a musician, but in his youth he'd toured northern California with a four-piece combo, playing his drums at weddings and Grange-hall dances. This gave him his first glimpse of the country beyond the Alexander Valley, but he didn't really leave home until the early nineteen-forties, when he took a job as a riveter at Douglas Aircraft, in Santa Monica. He was good with machines and parts, and eventually worked his way back to the San Francisco area and became a coördinating foreman

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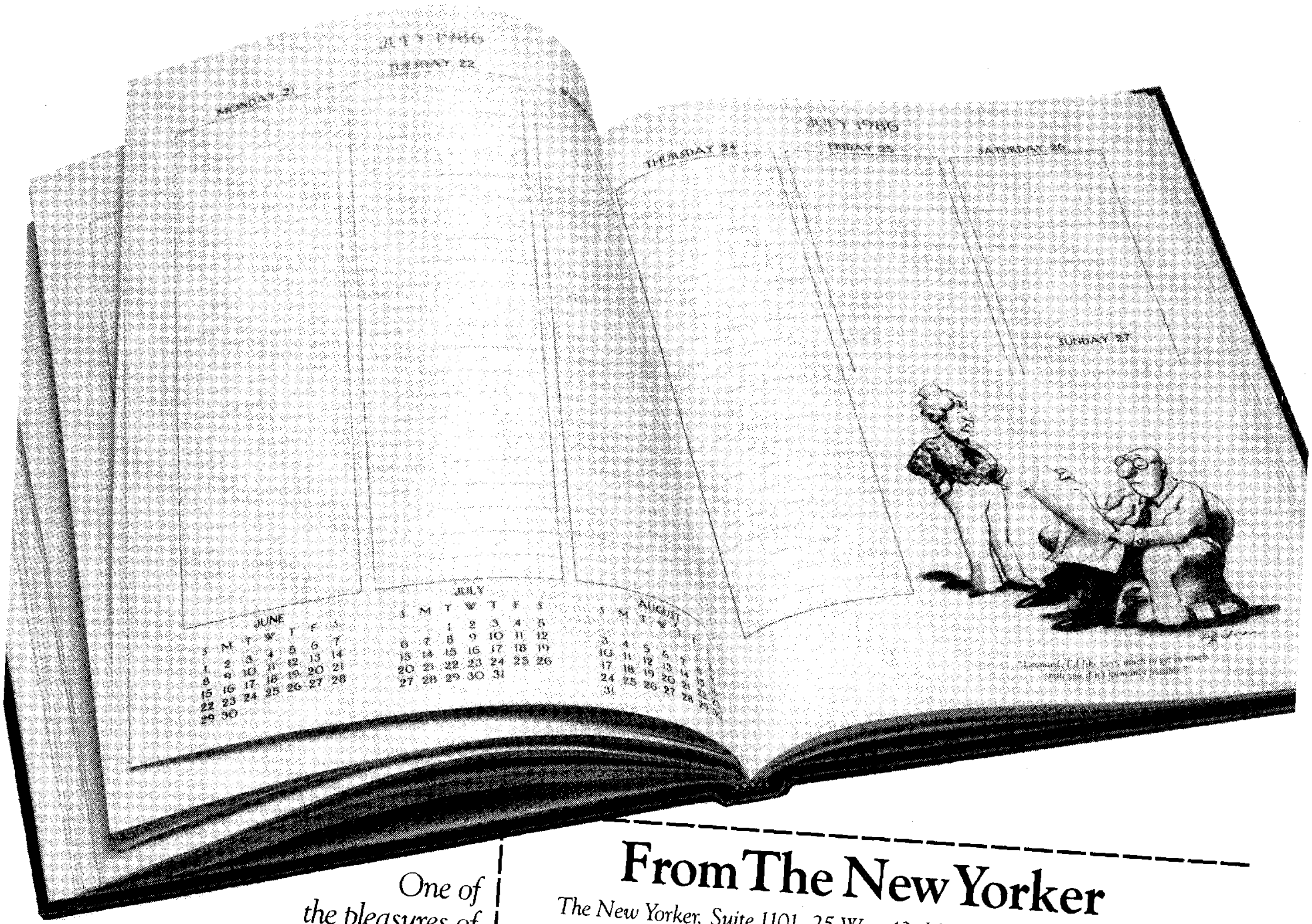
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for Hammond Aircraft. He was responsible for all three shifts at the plant—day, swing, and graveyard. It nearly drove him crazy. He was constantly running into problems. The girls on the graveyard shift were particularly bad. They'd stay out until almost midnight drinking and dancing with G.I.s, and then they'd show up at Hammond in an unenlightened condition, with their lipstick smeared and bourbon on their breath. Bob couldn't eat or sleep and he lost so much weight that people started worrying about him. One weekend, he went home to visit his parents, and his mother looked him over and ordered him to quit, so he did and went to work at the store. He'd been away from the valley for six years, and he had no desire to leave it again.

Bob held up the pumpkin can and read the recipe. "Modern housewife, she doesn't do anything from scratch," he said.

IN early December, there were heavy rains in the Alexander Valley, and I watched the old-timers come into the store and compare the readings they'd got on their rain gauges. They'd been doing this for sixty or seventy years, registering the minutest variance among microclimates, but they still expressed absolute amazement over the fact that the folks on Young Road had received 0.2 inches more rainfall than the folks on Chalk Hill. Could it be condensation? Fog? Sheer mechanical error? Well, nobody knew. The only sure thing was that the steelhead fishing in the Russian River would improve, so the old-timers stocked up on fishing tackle. It was in a wood-and-glass case that used to hold Havana cigars. Pappy Goodyear had smoked Havanas himself, and to keep them fresh he put a wet brick in with them. The water evaporated slowly, evenly, delicately, and made everything nice and humidified.

There were still cigars for sale at Goodyear's. I found ropy black Petris, perfumy Hava-Tampas, and stubby White Owl Invincibles banded in pink ("It's a Girl!") or blue ("It's a Boy!"). The farm workers preferred cigarettes, sticking to their treasured Marlboros. They were always a significant presence around the store, arriving throughout the day in small groups and arranging their minimal purchases on the counter. Buckets of lard. Batteries for transistor radios. Budweiser. They had an aspect of cool about them, a humorous take on

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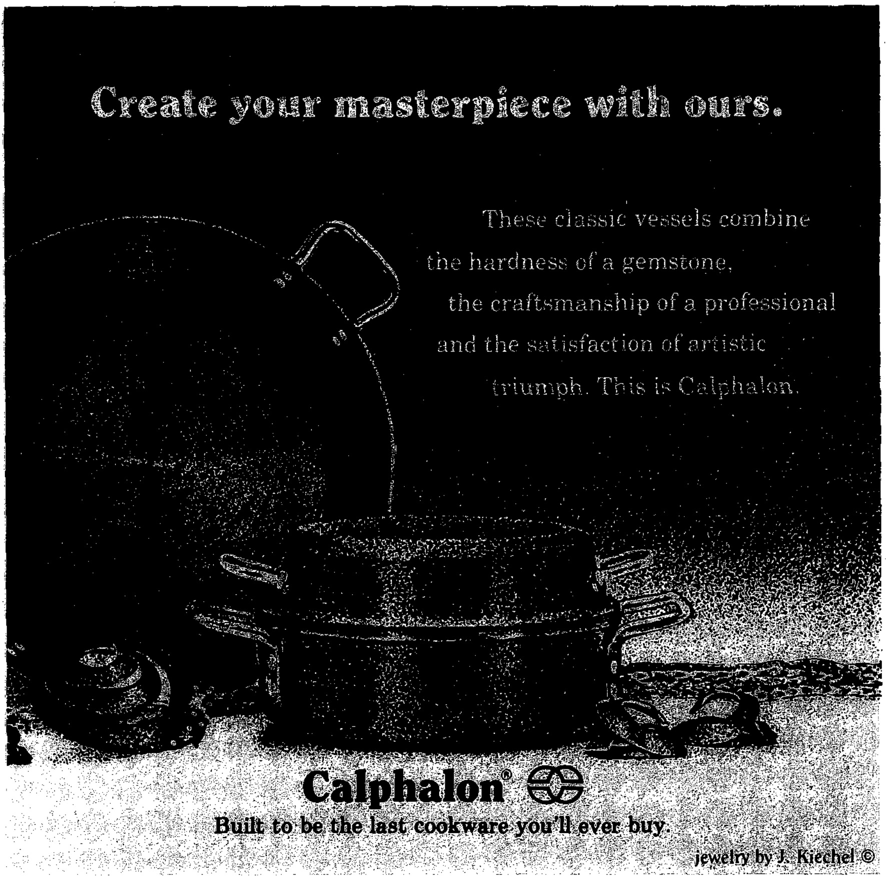
things. By gestures and attitude, they let it be known that they were in the United States only because it paid better than Mexico, not because it had more soul. Many of them dreamed of slipping back across the border with a nest egg that would allow them to live in princely fashion.

I learned that the younger workers could be a little wild. They were fond of marijuana and Flaco Jiménez accordion riffs, and when they were slightly ahead of the game they liked to blow a few bucks at various cantinas around the county. These joints were as shabby as any in Tijuana, decorated with bullfight posters or posters of big-breasted Tecate girls in clingy T-shirts. They had linoleum floors and Formica tables. The women in them could be loud and dangerous. A cantina was nothing if nobody had ever been murdered in it. The workers drank, they sang along with the jukebox, they wept for absent families, dead relatives, the homeland, growing more and more abstracted, until somebody remembered that they all had to go to work in the morning. Then they'd pile into a low-slung Trans-Am or a battered Lincoln with fins and foam dice, and they'd tool carefully back to the valley, keeping to side roads, where gringo cops were unlikely to be.

Not every farm worker took such risks, of course. Some of them were as upright as Rotarians. There were men who'd been around the vineyards for twenty years and had managed to save enough money to import their wives and children, uncles and aunts. They rented decent older houses, often on the estate of their padrone—this word was still in use, a carryover from the days when Italians owned much of the Alexander Valley and made raw red table wine from the few grapes they grew—and dressed in clothes from Sears or J. C. Penney. The switch from field rags to polyester indicated a change in status, signifying that the worker had risen to a supervisory position. He ran the padrone's crew, hiring and firing when necessary, and he earned a monthly salary instead of an hourly wage. Because he'd made something of himself, he wasn't afraid to offer his opinions about rootstock or herbicides, although he was always cautious not to show that he knew more about them than his boss. In all, he was a person of substance, probably a churchgoer, blessed with a body on the brink of prosperity. You could tell by looking at him that the lot of valley



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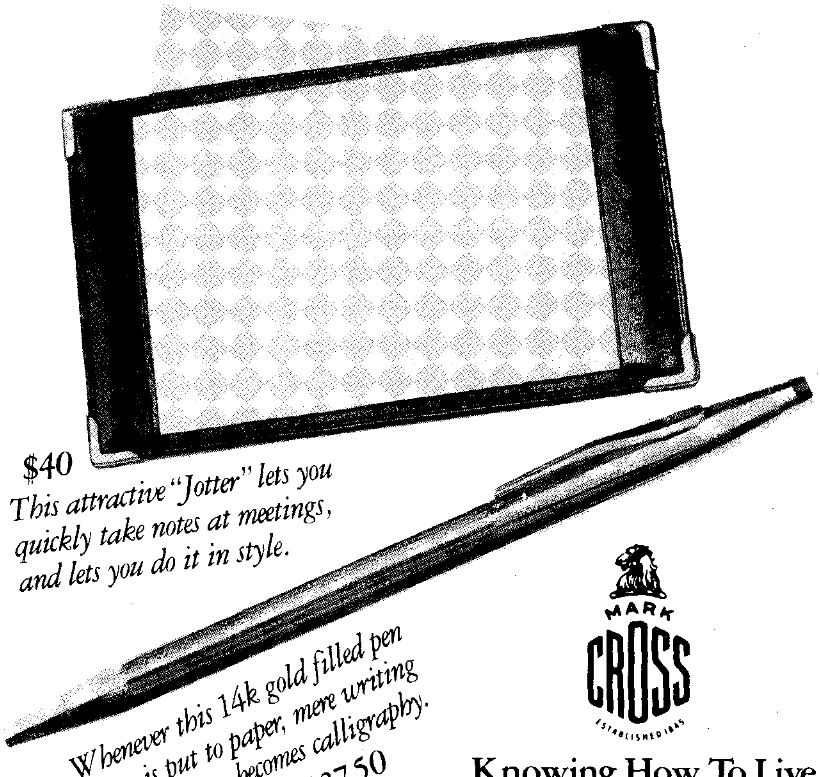

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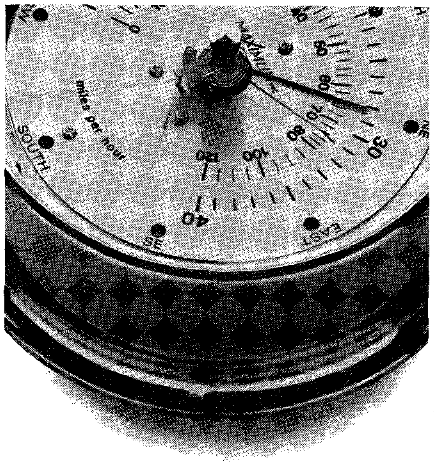
farm workers—the stable ones, at least—was not so bad.

There was a reason for this. Quality wine grapes were a crop with cachet, far outclassing humble tomatoes bound for canneries or rice destined for the Orient. The people who grew these grapes in the Alexander Valley were often educated and had a modicum of social consciousness you seldom found in hard-nosed farmers of the Central Valley. Furthermore, they knew it didn't pay to exploit workers or violate their rights, because then the workers turned against them and failed to produce. Good grapes had to be harvested at the exact optimum moment, when the sugar content was just right, so a balky crew could have a devastating effect. Wineries refused fruit that was over the hill, or else paid a diminished price for it and used it in cheap jug wines or—worse yet—as dread D.M., distilling material, the stuff that went into rotgut brandies.

I didn't see many growers at the Jimtown Store, but a few longtime valley residents still dropped in every now and then. Among them was Robert Young, a contemporary of Bob Goodyear's who'd become so celebrated in viticultural circles that his grapes actually received billing on the labels of premium wines. Young got top dollar for what he brought in each autumn, sometimes twice the going rate, and the appellation "Robert Young Vineyards" on a bottle of Chardonnay was a guarantee that the price would be high. Tom Johnson was another frequent visitor. He grew Bartlett pears as well as grapes, and he had a winery on Highway 128. That winery was a friendly, low-key place, lacking any corporate sheen, and if you happened to wander in on a winter day the woman in the tasting room was glad for the company. Johnson's wines were available at the store, along with the wines of other wineries nearby, such as Sausal and Fieldstone. The door to the room where they were shelved was propped open with a bottle of Gallo Hearty Burgundy.

I saw a lot of Mary Martinez. She was a hard worker, bilingual, an able hand behind the counter. She was good with customers, and they sought her out. As the days went by, there were more complaints about the store's closing, more grumbling about the Goodyears and their decision, but Mary tried not to listen. She felt that she'd been treated well, that the Goodyears deserved a rest. She told me she'd had other jobs, but never one



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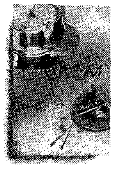

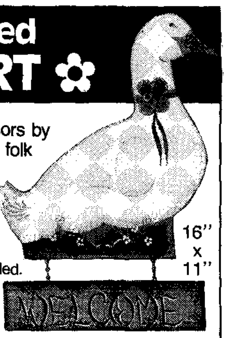

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where she got back as much as she'd put into it.

Most afternoons, the Rosales boys, who lived next door with their family, by the Alexander Valley Community Church, and had been working for the Goodyears since they were little, came by to give Mary some help. The eldest, Benny Rosales, was a lean man in his twenties who was about to graduate from Heald College and go on to a career in accounting. He would be the first professional in his family. Benny had prominent features and kept himself in shape with cross-country running. His brother Danny, who was a student at Santa Rosa Junior College, pumped iron. Danny had the easy manner of the second in line. He had big, bulky shoulders and a thick neck, but there was still a gentleness about him. The valley school kids knew this and always looked for him. They liked to wrestle with him, and even when he made them cry and run away they'd be back in a day or two, peeking through the door of Goodyear's and asking shyly, "Is Danny here?"

EVERY afternoon, Caroline Goodyear took a break to watch "Another World," and one day she asked me if I wanted to join her. We set off for the house across an expanse of open ground into which she and Bob had worn a distinct path. I counted twelve cats playing in the grass, crawling around the rusted frame of an abandoned piece of farm equipment. The sky was gray and unpromising. A flock of migratory starlings flew by overhead—maybe a thousand birds in all. They landed heavily on a utility wire, drawing it down, and when sparks shot from an insulator they exploded upward in an umbrella-shaped pattern, like specks of ink shaken from a fountain pen.

Caroline was still thinking about her customers and what they would do with themselves. "I wonder if Bob will change his mind," she said. "You've been talking to him. Do you think he'll change his mind?"

She had asked me this a few times now, and I never knew how to answer. "I don't know," I said.

Caroline walked with a steady, determined step that reminded me of the Italian women you see in hill towns. These ladies trudge on home with the groceries no matter what kind of agonizing events are going on around them. They have an unstoppable quality that Caroline shared, and I thought this might have to do with the

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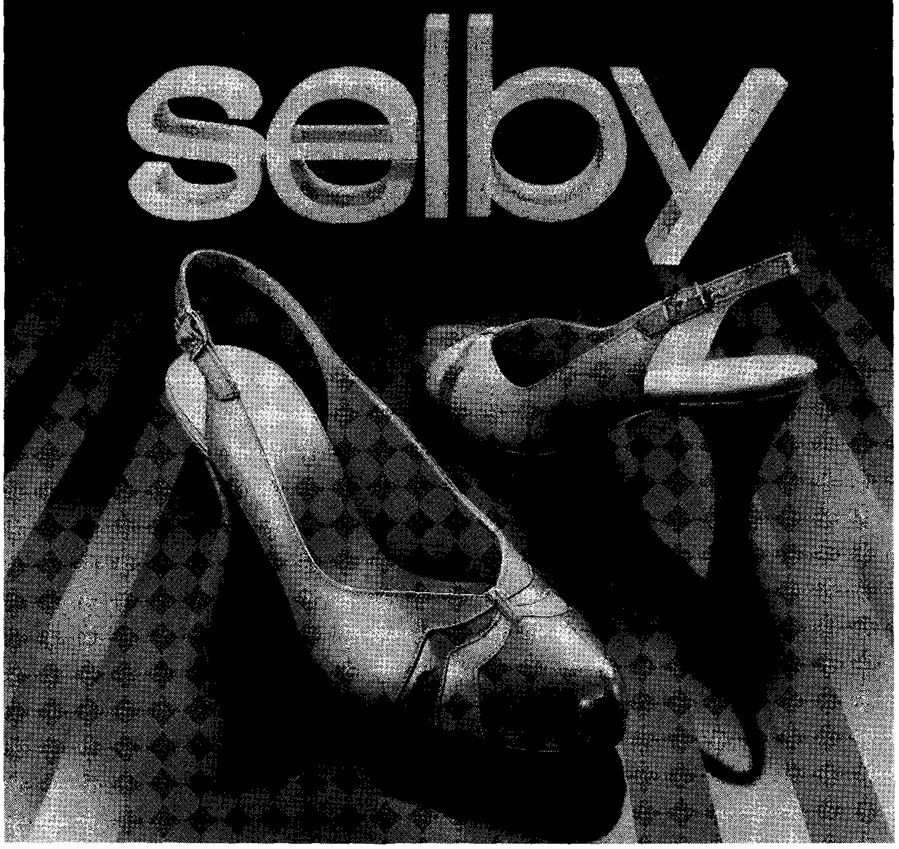

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formative years she had spent in Casabasciana di Lucca, in Tuscany. Her impressions of the Tuscan countryside were still quite vivid. She could remember helping her grandmother weave homespun items on a loom in the basement of their house. They had sheep, and they sheared them and sent the wool to a mill to be treated. When it came back, they spun it and made blankets and clothing. They also grew flax and made sheets from it. The sheets were coarse at first, but gradually the fibres began to give and they became as smooth to the touch as fine Irish linen.

When Caroline's family left Italy, they settled in an area near the valley. Her father, Lorenzo Teldeschi, had been there since 1921, the year Caroline was born, and he died there just four years after she joined him. The farm was rustic and had no indoor bathroom. Caroline went to a two-room school in the middle of an apple orchard and slowly learned to speak English. She didn't really enjoy herself until she started high school, in Healdsburg, where there were amenities she'd been missing. She went to football games and made the rounds of dances.

She never graduated. Before her senior year, in 1940, she left for San Francisco and took a job in a garment factory while she lived with family friends. A bit later, she moved over to the parts department of United Airlines and trained for defense work, but ultimately she was drawn back to Healdsburg. She had a period of restlessness then, and found herself changing jobs every two years—Rosenberg & Bush's Department Store, West Street Market, the White House Grill. In 1949, some girl friends invited her to a party in the valley, and she met Bob. He was just back from his own tour of the world at large, playing his drums and looking sharp. Caroline liked him. Within a year, they were married, and she moved into an apartment in his parents' home and started working at the store.

The side door to the Goodyears' house was unlocked. We walked through a country kitchen and into the living room. It was furnished simply, with armchairs and couches and a faded rug. Whenever a truck rolled by outside, the pictures on the walls rattled. There was a large RCA color console, and Caroline turned it on and sat down. She slipped off her rubber boots and revealed a pair of bright-red socks.

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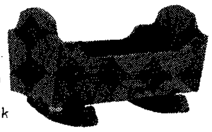

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Onscreen, two slender and beautiful women were having drinks, in Majorca. One of them said, "Charisma is a mystery only understood by those who possess it."

"That's all they do sometimes," Caroline said, laughing. "Have drinks."

We watched for a while. My eyes would rise involuntarily from the set and look out through a picture window at the vineyard across the road. Occasionally, Caroline would grab a flyswatter from under the couch and use it on a listless fly that had no business being alive in winter.

Not much was happening on "Another World," but that was the general state of affairs on soap operas. They reflected the drudgery of dailiness, and showed how little of consequence really occurs in people's lives. Tight closeups and bursts of emotional words hid the fact that everybody was waiting around for Fate to deliver some drama. It could be pregnancy, it could be disease, it could be plain old adultery.

Caroline knew about such things. In her many years of dealing with customers, there was not much she hadn't seen.

"All in all, we've had a real good clientele," she said. "There was one family, some years ago, they stole, they murdered. They had what you call bad behaviors. But they were an exception. Really, everybody's got a different way of looking at life. Some are sad, some are comical. They all have problems, sure. Some have children problems, some have marriage problems. The problems are the same as they always were, only people are more open about them now."

It was pleasant to be sitting in the living room on such a gray day. There was a fire in the fireplace, and the room was quiet except for the passing trucks and the women on TV. Our conversation gradually became less guarded. I told Caroline some things about my life, and she told me some things about hers. She had a gift for intimacy, for drawing close and speaking of heartfelt matters. She told me about her children, about her concern for them and how she tried (but sometimes failed) to keep from meddling in their affairs. She was deeply worried about her brother Frank, who grew grapes in Dry Creek Valley and had just been found to have incurable liver cancer. Frank was sixty-five. Caroline thought that maybe after the store closed she would take a trip with him,

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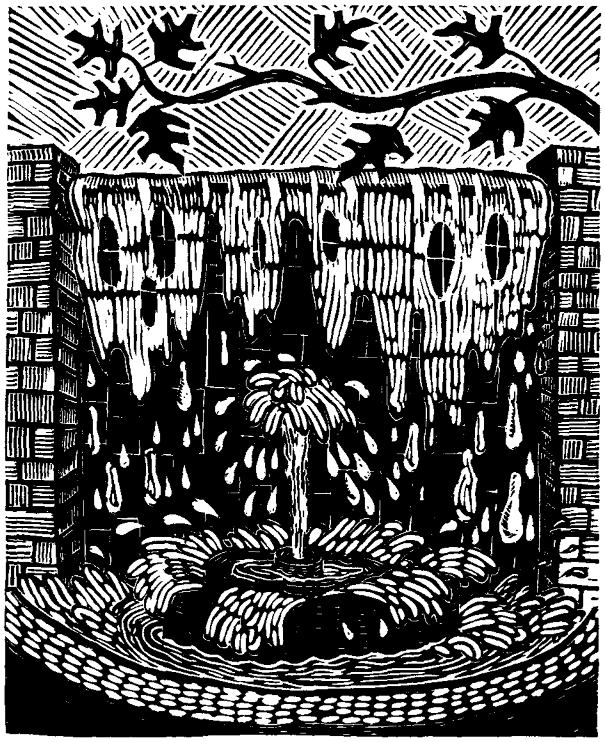

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if he was up to it. She had recently been to Hawaii with her daughter Roberta, and she'd enjoyed herself. Maybe she and Frank could go to Italy.

A DRAFTY afternoon at the Jimtown Store. Waylon Jennings roared through the mesh of the boombox, which was again on the ledge above the deli case. Logs of compacted turkey breast, rectangles of orange cheese. I was hungry, so Carole Rodriguez made me a sandwich. It had more meat in it than I normally eat in a week.

"Is the sandwich O.K.?"

"Fine."

Mary Martinez waited on a mechanic in greasy coveralls who bought Planters peanuts and a Pepsi. She waited on a cowboy from the Gauer Ranch, a big cattle spread, who bought five Sunkist orange drinks and a bag of Mexican pastries.

A farm worker appeared at the counter, looking diffident, speaking little English, waving a form around.

"Driver's-license renewal," Mary said.

Carole went over to help the man. She asked him questions in Spanish and showed him what to write. She was patient with him, as deliberate as a good teacher, but her body wasn't at rest and she kept tapping a foot on the floor and flicking ashes nervously from her cigarette. Whenever I was around her, I had the impression that she was in transit, about to drop what she was doing and rush off to her next appointment. She seemed bound to the store by circumstance, not choice, and her quarrel with her father remained unresolved. It was almost stylized sometimes. Bob would get angry at her for some reason, but what could Carole do to satisfy him? If he thought she was too young or irresponsible to take over the business, then why should he blame her for behaving exactly as he expected her to behave? And who said his definition of responsibility was the right one? They were still miles from seeing eye to eye.

Later that day, I talked to Carole about her feelings. "Hey, it wasn't me who got all upset about the article in the paper," she said. "The one about 'doing your own thing.' You know who really threw a fit? My sister, Roberta. She threw a fit, not me. Listen"—she shifted her weight from one leg to the other—"I mean, it's not up to me, you know? Let them do what they want to do, I don't care. At least I'm glad for my mother, you know, that she's retiring, because she deserves it. She'll get to do some of the things she's always wanted to do."

BOB GOODYEAR was wearing a baseball cap that said "Calf Manna" on its crown, and he pushed it back on his head. "You never know what's going to happen in this business," he said, sounding happy that his day had begun with a surprise. He'd had an early phone call from a fellow at the Jordan Winery who was looking for some fifty-pound sacks of eggmaker and hen scratch for his chickens. "Well, I don't have any in the haymart, so I'll have to get some in town," he told me. "Want to come along?"

Bob drove a half-ton G.M.C. pickup. It wasn't new—not anywhere near new—and he'd just had the engine rebuilt. The truck wasn't running well. There was a problem with the gas line, and we bucked and snorted as we pulled onto Highway 128. Bob fiddled with the choke. He had a mild cold and looked under the weather. He paid little attention to the road, having driven it some twenty thousand times. When he was just fourteen, he'd driven it in a REO truck, with a special license that Pappy had got him. It was supposed to be good only for deliveries between the two stores, so whenever Bob went joyriding on the sly he had to toss a couple of loaves of white or whole wheat on the front seat.

We drove over the Alexander Valley bridge and looked at the Russian, which was still muddy and bloated, carrying off willows and gouts of earth. Bob said he hoped he'd get to do some steelhead fishing soon. His favorite stream was the Klamath, up near the Oregon border, in a part of California that was still comparatively unspoiled.

"Problem is, I keep losing my fishing buddies. There used to be three military men in Healdsburg, all of 'em retired, and I always used to be able to drag one of them along. Then they all bit the dust, goddammit." He said he might go now with Tom Johnson's father, who was in his eighties but was still a fine fly-fisherman. "I'll tell you, it's beautiful on the Klamath. I'm not a horticulturist, so I don't know the names of the trees up there, but you ought to see them in the fall. You'd think there was a forest fire in the

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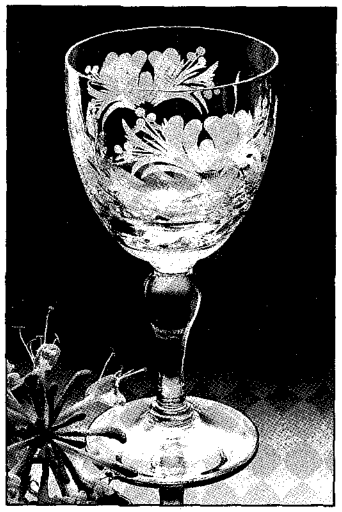

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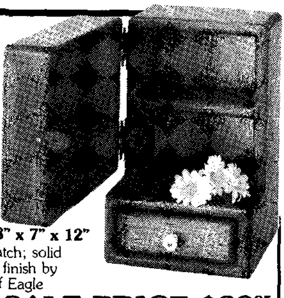

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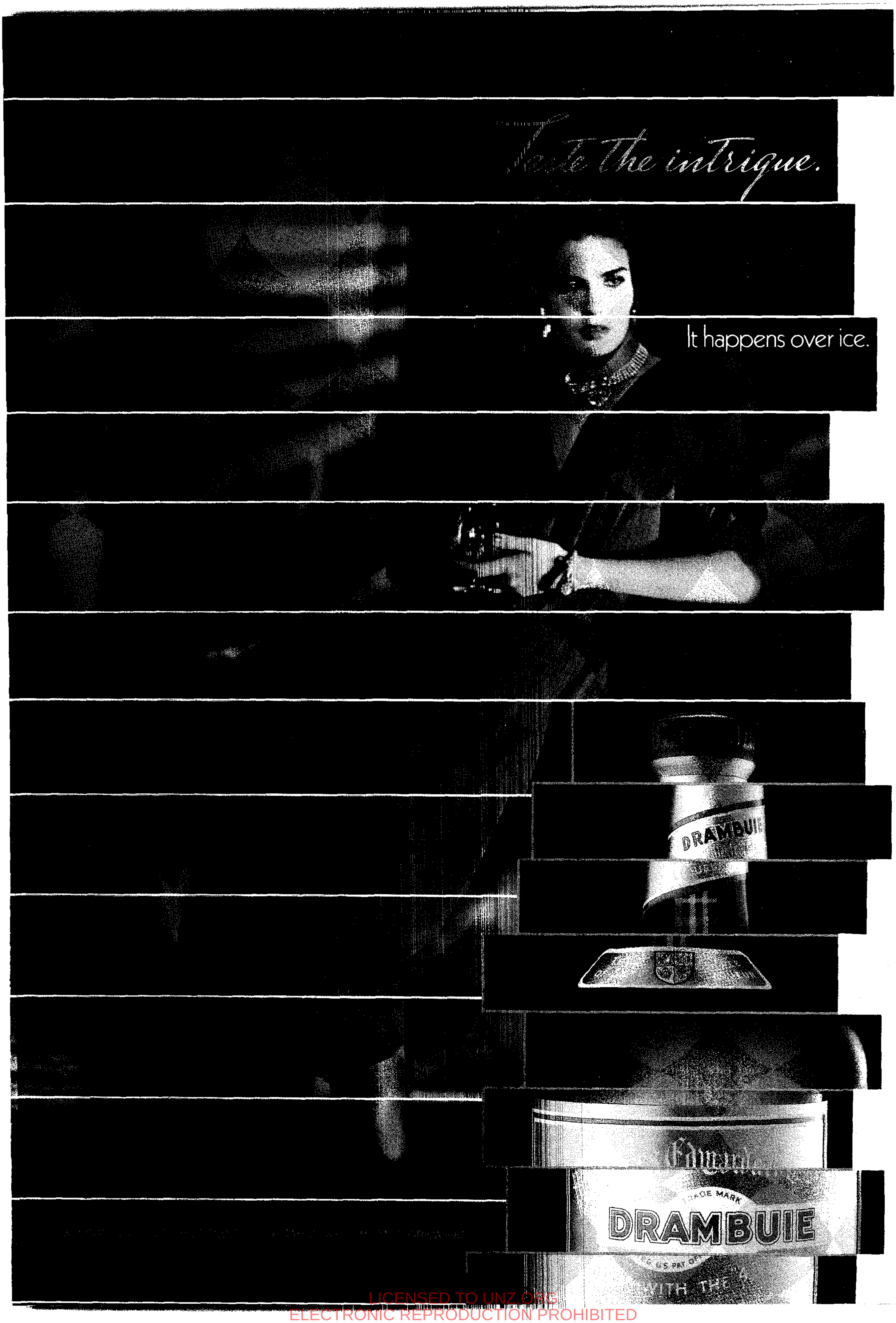
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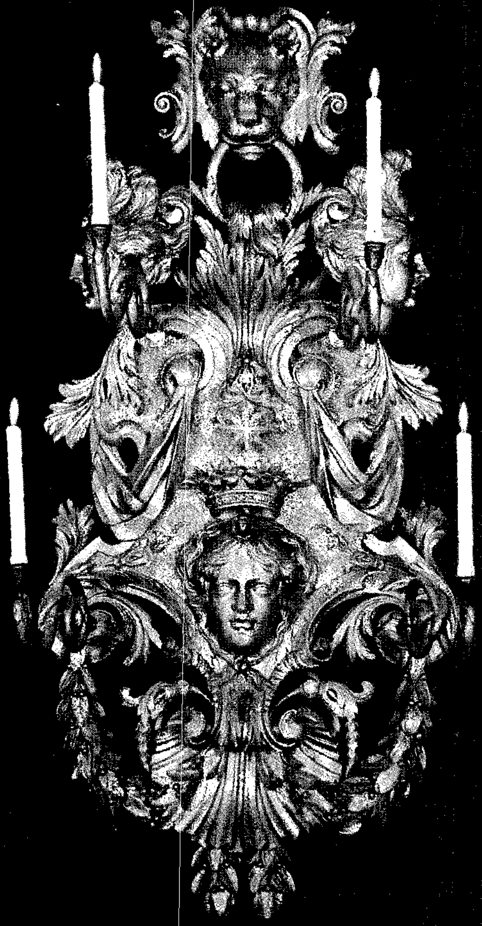

Gilt Wall Sconce by William Kent. c. 1730. Knole, Kent. The National Trust.

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mountains. See that tail-light?" He pointed to the car ahead of us. "That's how bright the trees get. It's just that spectacular."

Our first stop in Healdsburg was the Crocker Bank. Bob got in line to wait for an opening at the merchants' window. He seemed glad to have me along. Every job has its secrets, and he was sharing some of his. He introduced me to his teller, Darlene Gouveia, an attractive young woman of whom he was obviously fond. He handed her the checks and money he'd taken in over the past two days. It amounted to more than four thousand dollars, but the total was deceptive, since many of the checks had been cashed as a courtesy.

"Did you see 'Knots Landing' last night?" Darlene asked as she ran through his totals.

"Pretty good, wasn't it?" Bob said agreeably.

Darlene leaned forward and lowered her voice. "The guy with the beard was in on it," she said.

She stamped Bob's passbook and gave him some rolls of coins. Out in the truck, he shook his head. "I don't know how many millions of bucks I've carried over this road. I wouldn't do it if it wasn't necessary for the trade. I've just been lucky nobody's ever robbed me."

We drove to a small shopping center and stopped at the La Luna Market. De Luna was the owner's surname, and he catered almost exclusively to farm workers. There were piñatas dangling from the ceiling. A clerk at the back of the store piled tortillas, a dozen to the pack, into a cardboard box and carried it to the truck. I asked Bob how tortilla sales were.

"Spasmodic as hell."

The Jon Wright Feed Store was on a side street. Jon Wright wasn't around, but his wife, Janice, put some sacks on a dolly and wheeled them over to us. It fell to me to load them on the truck. Eggmaker is a feed that contains grains and egg mash. It has the consistency of Grape Nuts. Hen scratch is made up of wheat, milo, cracked corn, and sorghum. The first fifty-pound sack of eggmaker you lift weighs exactly the same as a fifty-pound sack of hen scratch. But the second sack—eggmaker or hen scratch, it doesn't matter—weighs about fifty-five pounds. After that, the weight increases exponentially; the tenth sack weighs four hundred pounds.

When I was done, I leaned against the tailgate for a minute and happened to notice Bob's wedding ring. It was a silver band with a number of tiny holes in it, and I commented on how unusual it was.

"Little rubies were in those holes," he said. He stuck out his other hand, which was knobby and worn, and showed me another ring, which had three large red stones. "Caroline gave me this as a replacement. One birthstone for each of the kids."

We headed out to the valley. The truck really acted up under its load of tortillas and feed. It stalled a few times and coughed some smoke. As we pulled into the store parking lot, it began to sputter, and then the engine quit. Bob let the truck glide to a side door. He smiled wryly. "It's a miracle we made it," he said.

THE last day I spent at the Jimtown Store wasn't much different from all the other days. Caroline opened at seven o'clock and took care of the coffee crowd and the sandwich crowd and the crowd of walking hangovers who were on their way to construction sites and needed jugs of V-8 or Minute Maid orange juice to replenish their systems. After the rush, she occupied herself with minor chores, straightening shelves and filling in holes in the candy rack. Bob came in around ten to get some papers from his office. He'd discovered a bad mistake while he was doing the bookkeeping. Danny Rosales had cashed a check that was blatantly in error, violating a rule Bob had invented to keep such things from happening. There were three rules in all. Rule No. 1: Check must be signed properly. Rule No. 2: Check must be endorsed properly. Rule No. 3: Endorsement must match name on check. This check was made out to Antonio Rivera, a dishwasher at the Tip Top Café. Antonio Rivera had endorsed it "Antonio Gonzales." That wasn't the only mistake. The numbers in the box on the check read "180.02," but the Tip Top's paymaster had written "One hundred eight dollars and eighty-two cents."

"I've got a call in to Mr. Low," Bob said wearily. Mr. Low owned the Tip Top and also the D-Mart supermarket. "I hope he can clear this up."

"Are you going to Junior Peavler's funeral this afternoon?" Caroline asked. Junior was the grandson of Pappy's old friend Charlie Peavler.

"I don't think so," Bob said. "I feel

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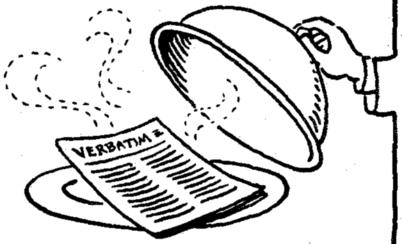

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like I'm coming down with something. Carole here yet?"

"She's got a dentist's appointment. She's going to be late."

Bob hitched up his trousers. "Well, I'm going to get ready for town," he said, disappearing into his office.

Around lunchtime, I went over to the house again with Caroline. The path was dry now, so she'd traded her rubber boots for running shoes. "Bob should go to that funeral," she said. "He's known the Peavlers forever." I was thinking what an amazing institution marriage is—how tenacious and forgiving you have to be to make a marriage last.

In the living room, Caroline tossed a log on the fire and sat in her armchair. The soap-opera women were still in Majorca, and they'd been joined by their husbands and lovers, who were just as beautiful as they were. I could sense trouble in the offing—a lack of ardor and endurance, a general tilt in the direction of chaos.

"This house needs so much work," Caroline said, picking at the fabric of her chair. "I'll get to it after we close."

"Have you done any more thinking about the future?" I asked.

"Not really," she said. Her eyes got wide, and she laughed and touched my arm. "Maybe we'll find a buyer yet. Maybe he'll let me come over and sweep the floor for him."

That afternoon, a Friday, the store was especially busy. A mother brought her daughters in for ice cream and told Caroline they were going to San Francisco to see the Lipizzaner horses. Carole arrived and gave a Tootsie Pop to a little girl whose lips were infected and had been painted blue. The phone rang, and Caroline answered it. She said, "*Sí, sí, sí, sí,*" nodding, and then hung up and said to Benny Rosales, "Benny, your mother's hungry. She wants you to bring her some tortillas." Benny ran off to deliver two dozen.

Meanwhile, Danny Rosales stopped in, saw the bum check, and said there was no possible way, uh-uh, that he could have paid out one-eighty instead of one-oh-eight. Danny had on a pink shirt. He was going to San Francisco, too, but not to see the Lipizzaners. Benny raced through the door in time to wait on an older woman who was holding a small poodle and wanted two bottles of wine. Caroline sold a money order to the Langendorf bread man so that he wouldn't have to carry cash on his route. She said, "Hello, Tammy," when a teenage girl burst in with a friend of hers. The girls wore

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Healdsburg High School cheerleading uniforms—Go Hounds!—and they giggled and asked for a can of frozen pink lemonade. All this happened fast. There wasn't time for anybody to think.

I STOPPED at the house to say goodbye to Bob before I left. He had just got up from a nap. There was a card table in the kitchen, and it was as thickly covered with bills and receipts as his desk. A cane was propped against a wall, left over from the months when he was recovering from his broken leg. He looked at the table and said, "I wish I'd taken retirement at sixty-two."

He gave me a copy of a mimeographed letter that formally announced the store's closing—no, he wasn't going to change his mind at the last minute—and then he put on his denim jacket and his baseball cap and stepped outside with me. It was dark and cold. A ground fog was beginning to form, spreading a low, thin cloud across the valley.

Bob lit a Belair and nodded in the direction of the store. "There's still a few bucks to be made out of that son of a bitch if somebody comes along who's dry behind the ears and has the stamina to put in thirteen-hour or fourteen-hour days," he said. "I don't have it anymore, and neither does Caroline—even though she won't admit it. It's really not a bad business to be in. Not at all. People think I don't have any emotions about it. But I do. I hate like hell to have to close that store."

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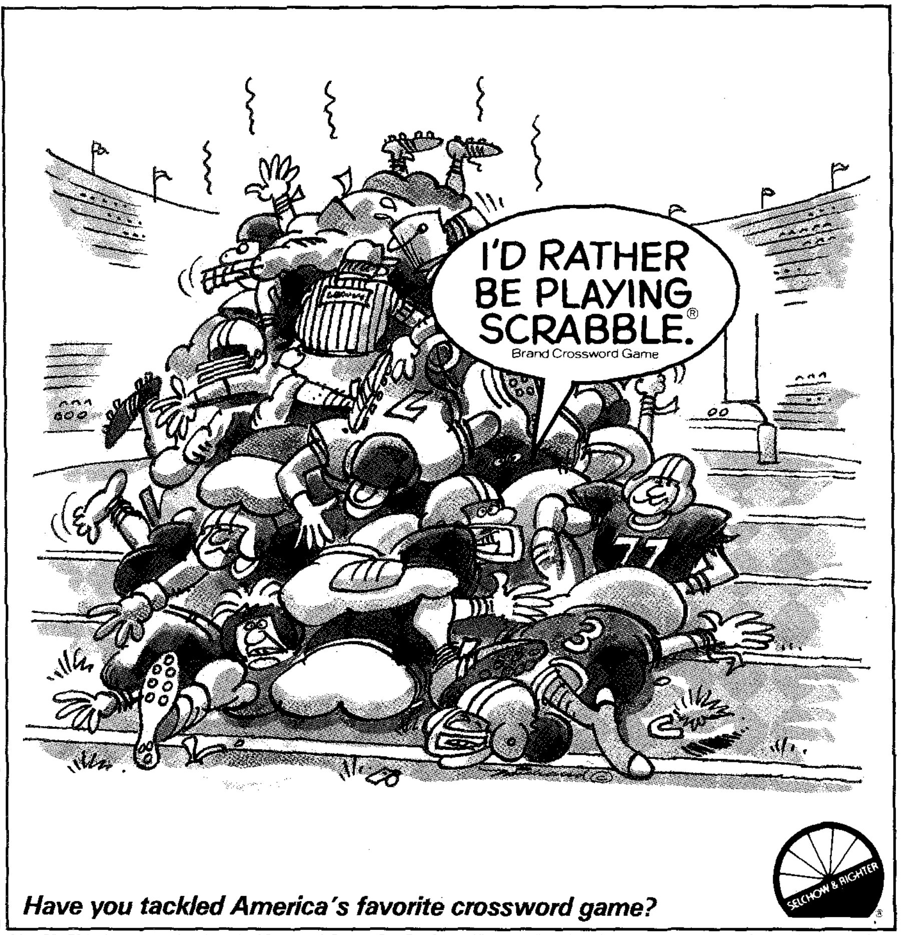
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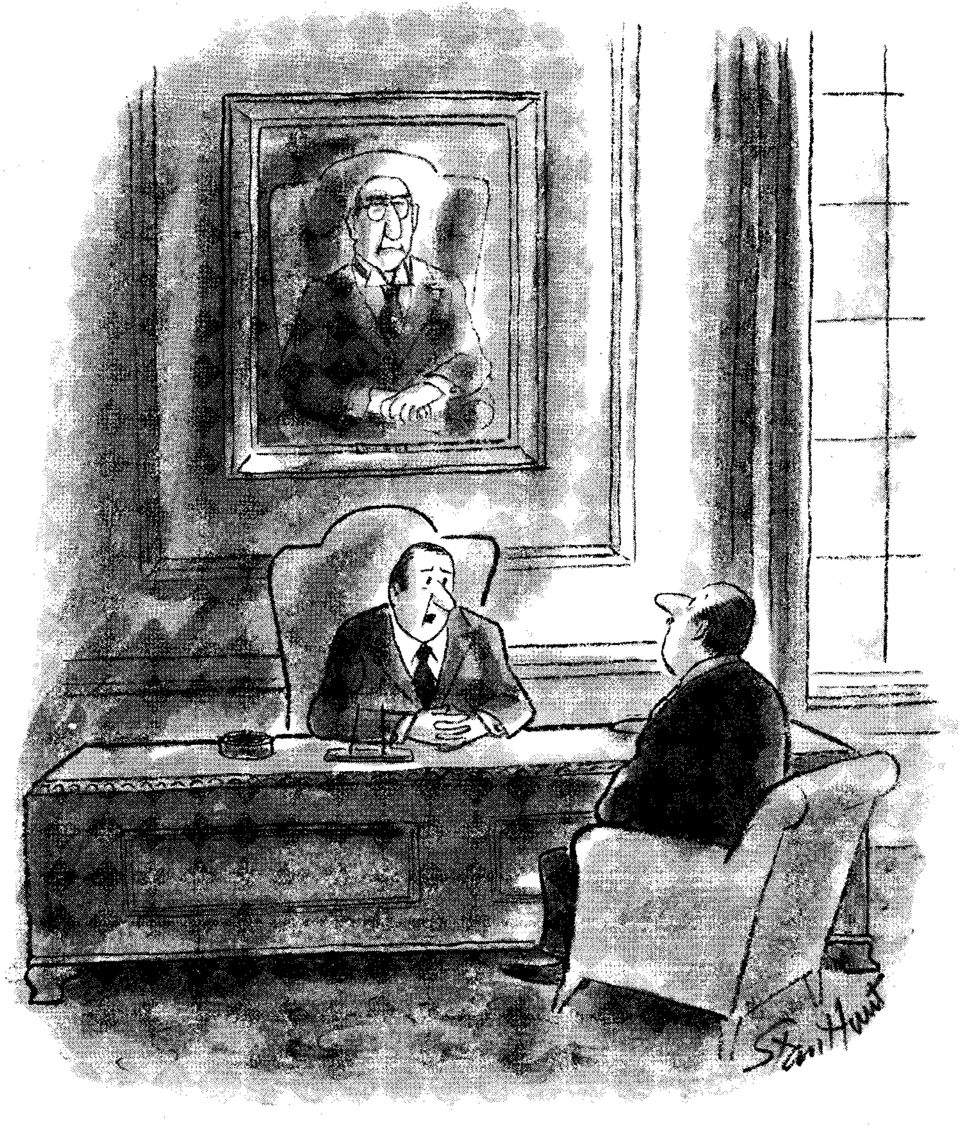
MUSICAL EVENTS

Birthday Honors

THE year has brought centenary observance of Thomas Tallis, who died in 1585, and Heinrich Schütz, who was born that year; of Bach, Handel, and Domenico Scarlatti, who were born in 1685; of Alban Berg and—less widely—George Butterworth, Deems Taylor, and Egon Wellesz, who were born in 1885. Handel has held, and holds, the limelight; there was much great music by him, neglected for centuries, waiting to be rediscovered. On Scarlatti's birthday, October 26th, Bach and Handel were sung and played in Merkin Hall, by the Sine Nomine Singers and Baroque Orchestra, conducted by Harry Saltzman. The works were two representations of Alcides at the bivium—young Hercules at the point in his life when he had to choose between the paths of pleasure and of virtue. He chose the path of virtue. The edifying scene—with two allegorical figures, one stern and one alluring, vying for the hero's adherence—was often treated by artists and composers. Later in the eighteenth century, Metastasio's "Alcide al Bivio," written for the wedding of the nineteen-year-old Joseph II and Isabella of Parma, in 1760, was much set. Bach's version, "Hercules auf dem Scheidewege: Dramma per Musica" (Cantata No. 213), was first performed in a Leipzig coffee-garden on the eleventh birthday of the Elector of Saxony's son, in 1733. There's a wonderful opening chorus, an extended movement dancing through many harmonic fields. Pleasure, a soprano, lullabies Hercules' conscience with the lovely "Schlafe, mein Liebster," familiar from the Christmas Oratorio, for which Bach reused the cantata. There it's dropped from B-flat to G, the voice is doubled in octaves by a flute, and four oboes—two d'amore and two da caccia—are added to the score. The sound is magical; but the simple string version in "Hercules" is melting, too. In the cantata, oboe timbre is saved for the following numbers. An oboe d'amore as well as a second voice plays echo to answer the questions of Hercules, an alto. (Bach makes one of his rare jokes, when the echo jumps in impetuously to give some decisive answers on notes that Hercules has not yet sounded, taking the words out of his mouth.) And an oboe and a violin second the aspirant exhortations of Virtue, a tenor. Hercules and Virtue embrace in duet. Mercury, a bass, draws the moral—this has been an allegory of Electoral merit—and summons the Muses to sing a final gavotte. If their words scan oddly, it's because the number is adapted from Cantata No. 184.

Handel's "The Choice of Hercules" was first performed at Covent Garden, in 1751, on a bill with "Alexander's Feast." The score was adapted from incidental music Handel had written for a production of Tobias Smollett's "Alceste" which was planned on a grand scale but didn't come off. Handel took trouble over his contribution, and his music was well worth saving, even though its fit to the new subject is sometimes loose. This musical version of the legend contains two lullabies; in "Alceste" they were alternative settings of an air, "Gentle Morpheus," that Calliope sang over the stricken Admetus. The first of them, recast as "This manly youth's exalted mind," introduces an unusually gentle Virtue, accompanied by rocking figures from flutes and strings. The second, Hercules' "Yet, can I hear that dulcet lay, As sweet as flows the honey dew," while he inclines toward Pleasure, is one of the most tenderly seductive airs that Handel ever wrote. Drama begins with a newly composed trio: the hero's bewildered "Where shall I go?" is answered in different strains by Pleasure's "To yonder breezy plain!" and Virtue's "To yonder lofty fane!" It ends on a half cadence, Hercules still in doubt; Virtue breaks in briskly and

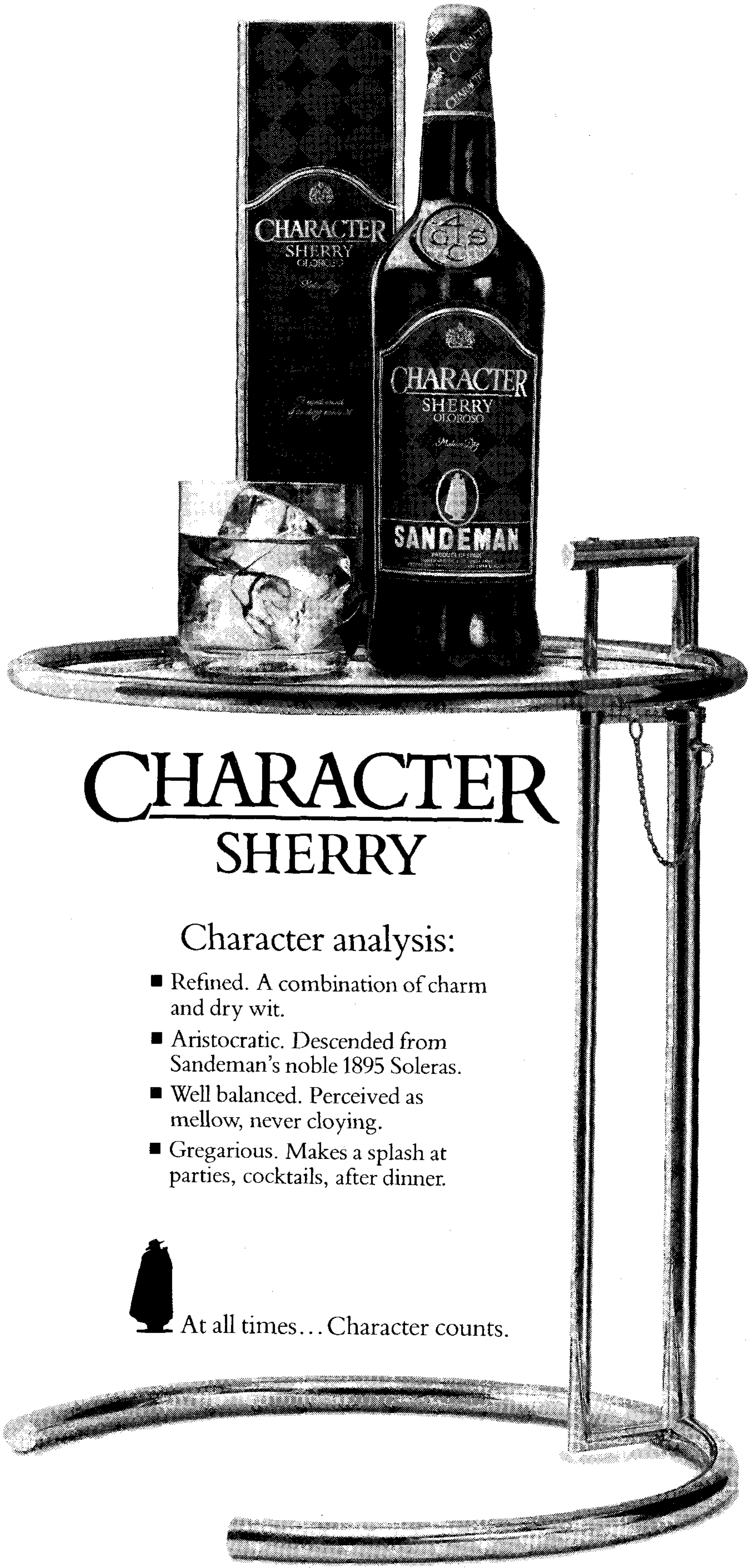


"Tell me, Baxter, does my father seem to you to be smiling approvingly or frowning disapprovingly?"

develops her trio theme in an air, "Mount, mount the steep ascent." Hercules makes his decision, and Handel, music's great hymner of sensuous delights, seems almost to regret it, for the hero announces his intention in D minor, adopting the "Alceste" air in which Charon had summoned shades "to Pluto's dreary shore." The chorus lauds the choice in a severe G minor.

Both works reveal their composers in unstrenuous vein. They made a happy pairing. Bach's Hercules was presumably a boy, and Handel's may have been Gaetano Guadagni, Gluck's first Orpheus. The roles were taken by the countertenor Jeffrey Dooley; his singing was clean, pointed, and brave, but the timbre in the higher reaches was owly. Bach's Virtue was sung by Frank Hoffmeister, Handel's (a lowish soprano part) by Marianna Busching. Julianne Baird, in both works, embodied Pleasure with a delightful sense of line and a bubbly feel for decoration. No two people agree about Baroque tempi nowadays; I found some of Mr. Saltzman's just a bit slow. Happily, he didn't beat time through all continuo-accompanied airs but let singers and players make music together, listening to one another. The oboe-d'amore and oboe solos were played by Stephen Hammer, a prince of Baroque oboists. The natural horns in the Bach—the parts are fiendishly difficult—emitted some murky sounds. The chorus was alert.

BETWEEN the Bach and the Handel, as entr'acte, the harpsichordist of the ensemble, Edward Brewer, played Scarlatti's C-major Sonata, K. 513. Earlier that day, he'd played it up at Symphony Space, where Scarlatti's birthday was being celebrated with an eight-hour, free-admission concert. Some ninety of his five hundred and fifty sonatas were played. On the platform, a Steinway was flanked by a fine Franco-Flemish harpsichord built by William Dowd and an Italian harpsichord, tangier in timbre, built by Carl Fudge. Eleven harpsichordists and eight pianists took part. Fernando Valenti, who in the fifties recorded Scarlatti sonatas by the shoal, opened the proceedings on the Dowd. Ivan Davis followed on the Steinway. Then Mr. Brewer took up the Fudge, and so did Colin Tilney. Robert Taub played the Steinway. I stayed for two hours: Symphony Space, like most modern concert halls, has no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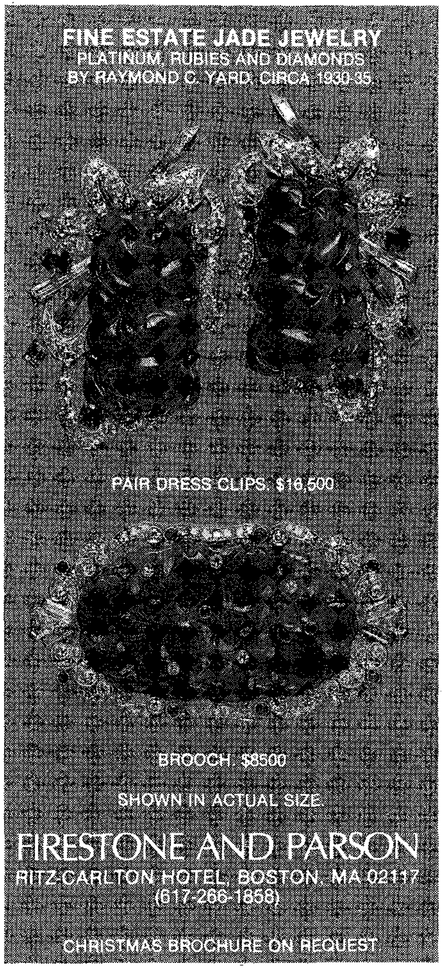
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windows, and it's not agreeable to be in a windowless room for longer than that. Besides, there was a long line of Scarlatti-hungry people on the sidewalk outside, waiting to be served.

Concert-hall performances of Scarlatti played on the piano by Gieseking, Casadesus, Lipatti, Michelangeli, Horowitz have bewitched me, and so I'm in no position to deplore the unsuitability of the modern instrument. Nevertheless, ears change, fashions change, and musicological perceptions eventually affect audiences' ways of listening. I doubt whether anyone left Symphony Space unconvinced that the clean, precise harpsichord is the apter machine for the display of Scarlatti's boldness and brightness—other things being equal, of course. But they weren't equal: Mr. Davis's fleet, exhilarating virtuosity and Mr. Taub's poetic intentness—each pianist at one with his instrument while he drew from it Scarlatti's music—were different in kind, one from the other, and both from the harpsichordists' various manners. The concert was a demonstration of creative genius that can bear many kinds of interpretation. Four sonatas were played on a Yamaha synthesizer by John Van Buskirk. Other evidence of adaptability could have been provided by guitar transcriptions (the record catalogues attest to their popularity), or Walter Carlos's recordings on the Moog. (A harpsichordist friend of mine, on first hearing these, said sadly, "To think that I've spent years and years trying in vain to approach such evenness and accuracy of statement.") At least three of the sonatas were written for the organ; some of them—possibly hundreds, Joel Sheveloff says in the New Grove—may have been intended for the fortepiano.

The party was arranged by Sara Fishko and Teresa Sterne, in association with WNYC, and WNYC broadcast it—four hours live and four delayed by two hours while "A Prairie Home Companion" took over. After the Merkin Hall concert, I caught the final stages over the air. Kenneth Cooper played four sonatas, and then an encore, with such bounding enthusiasm that the audience responded to his strokes with audible delight. What I heard was—the whole event must have been trebly so—a marvellous revelation of Scarlatti's ceaseless inventiveness. There was no question of monotony or of diminishing returns. The performers covered all possible approaches. Some of them played in

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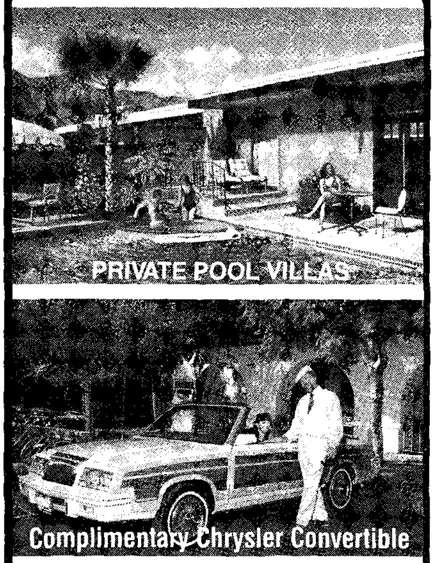

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pretty strict tempo; others were wayward, capricious, flamboyant. Some of them broke sonatas cleanly into two parts across the central double bar, as the old editions do; others observed the elisions that, in over a hundred sonatas, eliminate the barrier. The music was brilliant, poignant, witty, quirky, gentle, delicate, exuberant. This was a splendid display at once of Scarlatti's achievements and of the differing ways in which modern musicians respond to them.

SCHÜTZ is a composer whose radiance, nobility, grandeur, directness, dramatic power, and range should be known to the widest possible public. The fifth Grove had an eloquent essay on his music, by Anthony Lewis. In the New Grove, Joshua Rifkin's biographical section contains the fruit of new research, but Kurt Gudewill's account of the music is plainer than Mr. Lewis's. Colin Timms', which replaces it in the Grove "offspin" volume "North European Baroque Masters" (Norton), is plainer still. Schütz's music doesn't fit easily into the concert scene. It's all for voices, much of it accompanied by instrumental consorts unorthodox today. A good deal was recorded in the fifties and sixties, but the quatercentenary has not brought the flood of polychoral Psalm settings and of Symphoniae Sacrae that might have been expected. Mr. Rifkin's article in the October *Opus*, "Whatever Happened to Heinrich Schütz?," suggests two reasons for this. First: the early-music specialists, most of them active in instrumental fields, have become victims of their popularity; the former pioneers are now much in demand for yet another set of Brandenburgs, yet another "Messiah," yet another "Four Seasons." Moreover, as Mozart, then Beethoven fall into their province and become "early music," their forces tend to consolidate as a small string orchestra with a handful of winds, and the seventeenth century stands even less of a chance. This is a very rough summary of Mr. Rifkin's careful arguments as he contemplates "the paradox of how the very success of early music has come by now to narrow its horizons." His second suggestion—that student protest of the seventies led to the rejection of a composer championed by National Socialist musicians and scholars—seems to me less convincing. By that reckoning, Bach and Handel would be similarly tarnished.

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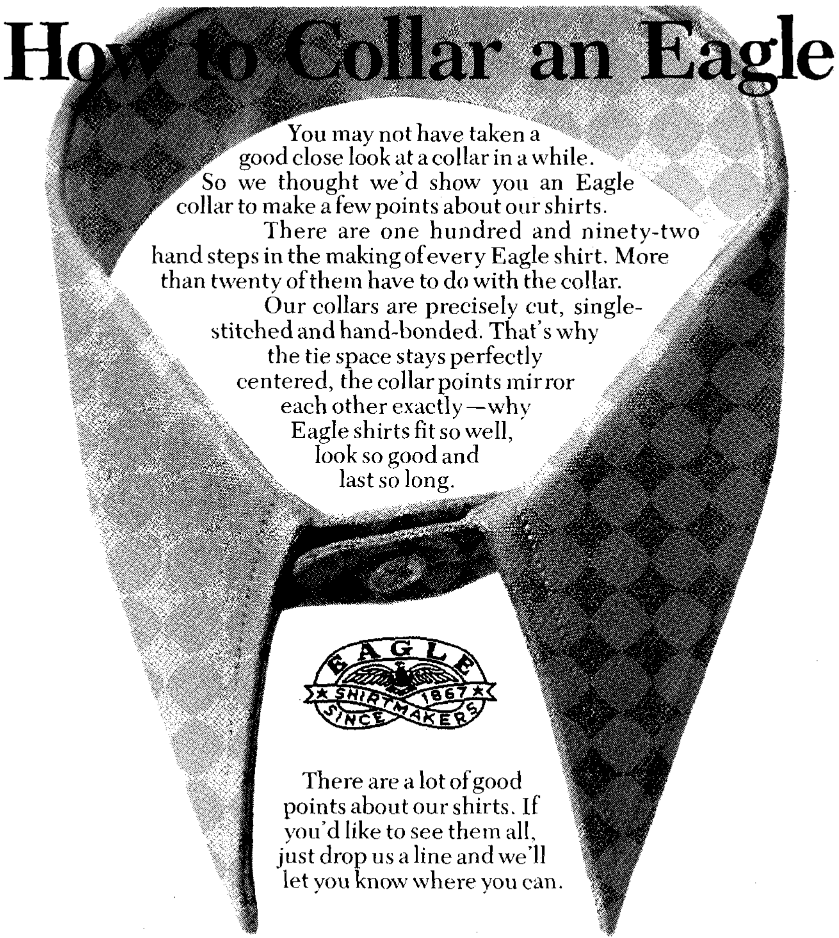

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whom Schütz would come as a natural mandate," Mr. Rifkin says. "In most instances, performing him means assembling the forces pretty much from scratch." I became a Schütz admirer in the nineteen-fifties, when recordings appeared of the Musical Exequy, the Seven Last Words, and (vividly sung by Hugues Cuénod, with Vienna instrumentalists conducted by Daniel Pinkham) a collection of Kleine Geistliche Konzerte and Symphoniae Sacrae. I became a Schütz devotee in 1962, at the inaugural concert of such an organization as Mr. Rifkin desiderates. That year, in London, Roger Norrington founded the Heinrich Schütz Chorale, a group of professional singers, and the Heinrich Schütz Choir, an amateur chorus—counterparts of Schütz's *coro favorito* and *capella*—and set St. Bartholomew-the-Great aglow with three masterpieces: the Musical Exequy, the Seven Last Words, and the German Magnificat. In successive years, in various seventeenth-century churches—Wren's St. Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe, which has the general proportions of Schütz's church in Dresden; Wren's St. Stephen, Walbrook, with its elaborate disposition of space—Norrington and his artists revealed the richness and variety of Schütz. In America, I've felt Schütz-starved—until last month, when the thirtieth International Heinrich Schütz Festival was held on the campus of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign at about the time of Schütz's birthday (the exact date of which is still in dispute).

The festival was combined with an international conference; some interesting—and one or two challenging—papers were read. There were six concerts in four days. The works spanned Schütz's career: from his Opus 1 (1611), the Italian madrigals he published after his years of study with Giovanni Gabrieli, in Venice, to his Opus Ultimum (1671), a monumental eight-part, double-chorus setting of Psalm 119, followed by Psalm 100 and the Magnificat. (It was published for the first time last year. The six surviving partbooks, thought to have been lost in the Second World War, turned up in Dresden, among some unclassified music of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries; the editor, Wolfram Steude, has had to reconstruct the treble and tenor lines of the second choir.) Only excerpts were given in Urbana, but the whole work has now been recorded. The University of

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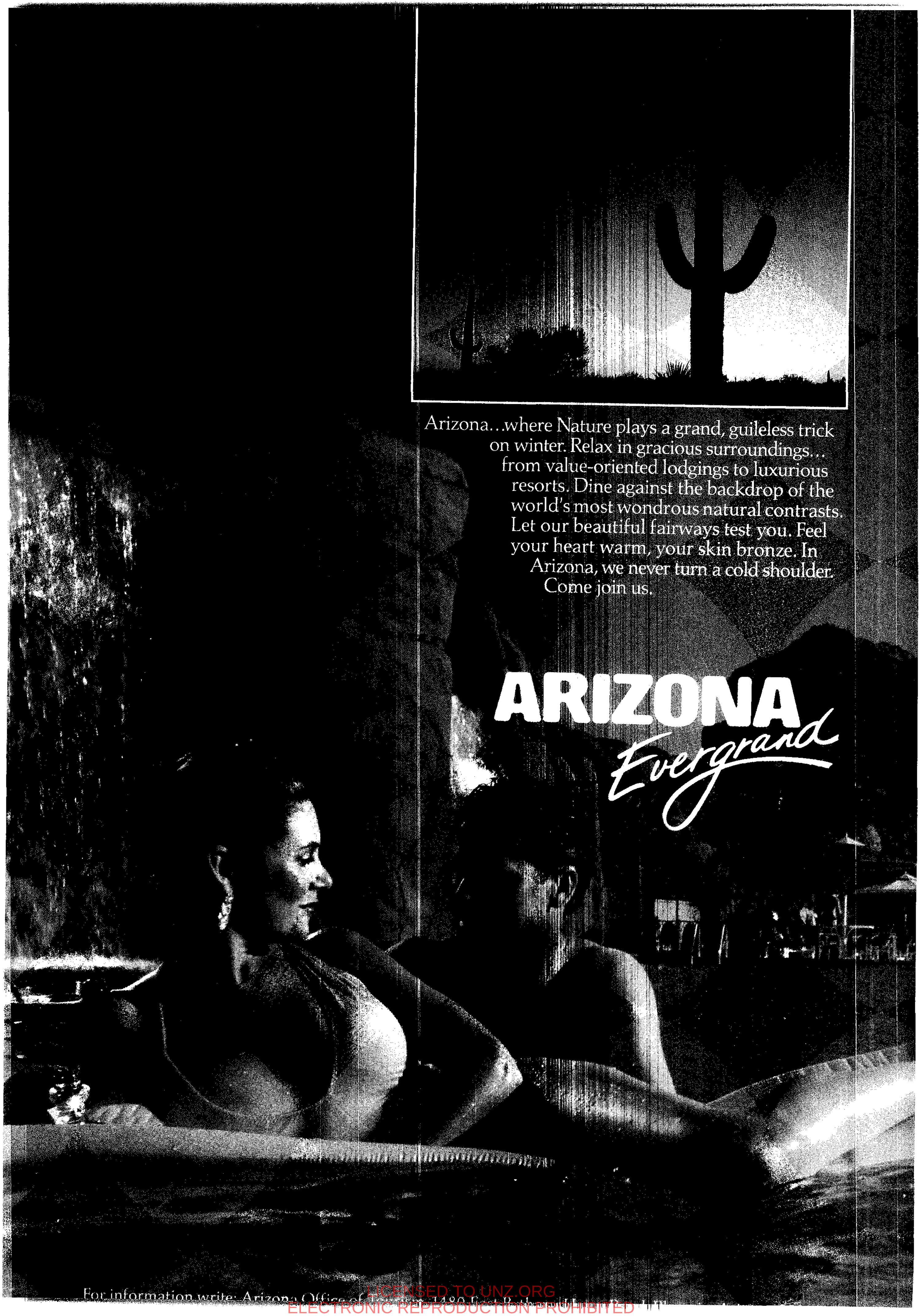

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But the bear did not find any bees buzzing or apple trees blooming. The woods were quiet and the trees were bare of leaves. The only sound in the woods was the muffled snoring of the other bears who were still sleeping in the den.

Suddenly, there was the sound of bells. Could it be Jacques the lumberjack and his daughter, Marie, passing by in their sleigh? No, wait, thought the bear, the jingle of bells was coming from the sky! Just as the bear looked up to see a sleigh pass overhead—KERPOW!—something dropped right on his head!

It was a brightly-wrapped box with a bow on top. And it had a tag that said "To Marie, From Santa Claus." Of course the bear did not know this because he could not read, and he had never heard of Santa Claus.

"Perhaps," the bear thought, "there is something good to eat in this box." But before he could open it, a voice came from above.

"You can't keep that box," called a wise old owl. "That's a gift from Santa Claus. It must have fallen from his sleigh tonight."

"Who is Santa Claus?" asked the bear.

The owl explained the story of Santa Claus, and how he brought presents to children every Christmas Eve.

"Oh my," said the bear, "we must get this gift to Santa Claus before Christmas morning!"

And so, with the owl flying overhead to keep a look-out for Santa, the bear ran through the woods with the Christmas present.

Suddenly, the owl shouted, "Santa's up ahead! His sleigh is on the roof of that log cabin!"

The bear bounded up a log pile that was stacked beside the cabin and onto the roof where Santa was beginning to unpack his sleigh.

"What's this?" Santa said. He was surprised to discover a bear on the roof, and especially one with a Christmas gift in his mouth. The bear explained the whole story—about how the present had fallen from the sky, and how he and the owl had rushed to find Santa before Christmas morning.

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Illinois Chorale and Concert Choir and an eight-voice chamber choir from the Hanover Musikhochschule took part, but the great performances were those of Alexander Blachly's Pomerium Musices, six finely tempered singers; Les Filles de Sainte-Colombe, four viol players of uncommon accomplishment; and the tenor Paul Elliott. Their account of the Resurrection History was deeply moving. Mr. Norrington conducted. A few hours earlier, one of the scholars had illustrated his paper with excerpts from Norrington's 1970 recording of the work. It seemed wonderful fifteen years ago. Today—as the conductor himself was quick to observe—it sounds too slow and too "thick." Years of exploration have brought great changes in performing style. Other highlights—moments of rare and inspiring beauty—were provided by the tender Annunciation dialogue, SWV 333, with Ann Monoyios as the Virgin and Drew Minter as the Angel; by the large-scale setting of Psalm 116, SWV 51, with its evocations of despair, salvation, and grateful praise; and by the impassioned monologues "Erbarm dich mein," SWV 447, and "Eile, mich, Gott, zu erretten," SWV 282, sung by Peter Stewart and Mr. Elliott, respectively. One small reproach and one disappointment must be recorded. At several of the concerts, the program books contained no texts but only translations; Schütz's word-setting is one of his glories. And all the performances were given in campus concert halls, none of them both acoustically and architecturally apt for Schütz. Otherwise, nothing but gratitude for days of marvellous music, sung and played with fervent, subtle artistry. —ANDREW PORTER

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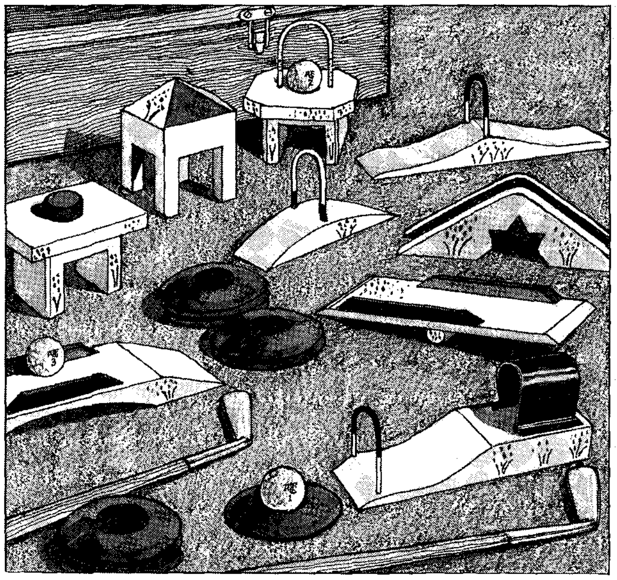

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THE ART WORLD

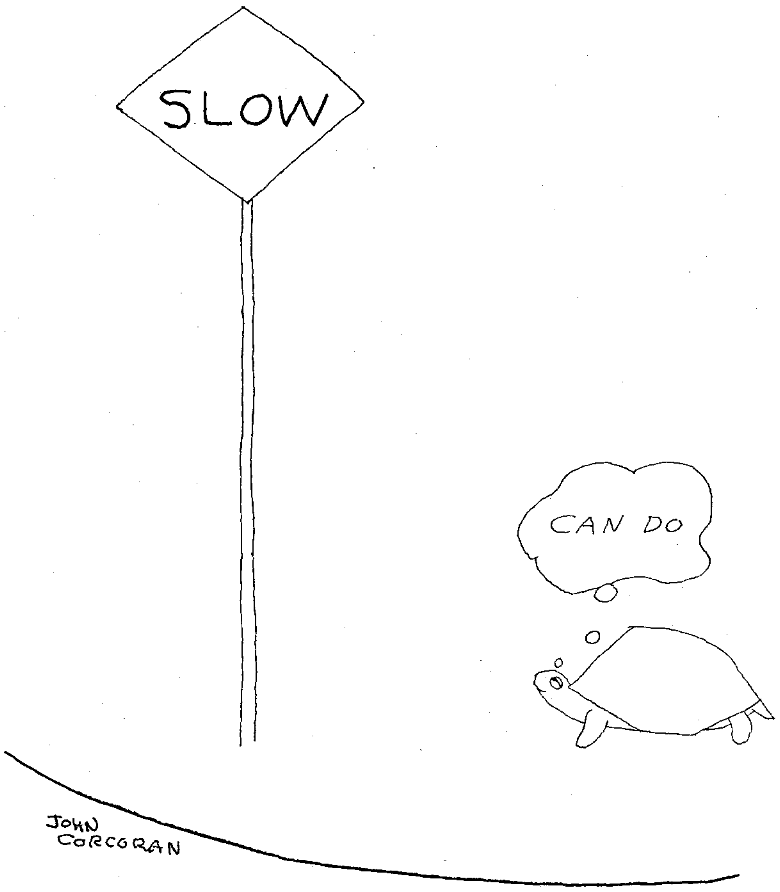
Knowing in Action

IS abstract art dying out? For twenty years, the pendulum of innovation has been swinging back toward figurative, more or less representational styles. While abstract work of very high quality continues to be produced, the *idea* of abstraction has lost all momentum. What had come to be regarded as the twentieth century's most important contribution to the visual arts now strikes many people, artists included, as either a passing phase or a dead end.

The Museum of Modern Art's exhibition "Contrasts of Form: Geometric Abstract Art 1910-1980" (through January 7th) does nothing to counter the notion of abstract art's precipitous decline. The show, which is drawn from the recent gift to the museum of two hundred and forty-nine works of geometric abstract art from the Riklis Collection of the McCrory Corporation (together with some crucial additions from the museum's own holdings), packs most of its excitement into the first few rooms, where we see Malevich, Mondrian, Larionov, Gontcharova, and the other pioneers taking the momentous first steps into an art whose forms bore no relation to the natural world. The development of analytical Cubism had led Picasso and Braque to the edge of total abstraction in 1910, but those essentially pragmatic artists refused to go over the edge. What they lacked, apparently, was an intellectual commitment to utopian ideals. In Russia, the Constructivist movement that grew out of the ideas of Tatlin and Malevich (and the fragmented forms of analytical Cubism) was closely allied to the political and social goals proclaimed by the October Revolution of 1917. In Holland, Mondrian and the other founders of De Stijl believed that their pure art of straight lines, right angles, and primary colors would be the model for a harmonious future society. The fervor of their idealism is everywhere apparent in the paintings and objects of those early years, when the "new reality" of abstraction was being opened up. More than half a century later, we can still feel the crackle of excitement in paintings such as Larionov's "Rayonist Composition: Domination of Red" (1912-13) and Malevich's "Suprematist Composition: Airplane Flying" (1915)—the sense of adventure and optimism.

Unfortunately, the excitement did not last. It was crushed by the state in Russia, along with other aspects of independent thinking. In Europe, events conspired more slowly but just as surely to extinguish the artists' utopian ideals. Economic depression, social turmoil, and the rise of Fascism made it increasingly difficult to believe in the universal harmony envisaged by De Stijl and earnestly sought after at the Bauhaus—where Constructivist principles and geometric abstraction were the basis of an effort to reconcile art and technology. The "pure" (geometric, hard-edge) branch of abstract art gradually ceased to be a philosophy or a cause. When it settled down to being merely a style, though, the life began to go out of it. Some beautiful abstract painting was done in the nineteen-thirties and forties; there was, above all, the supreme achievement of Mondrian's late paintings, done when he was living in New York in the early forties, and inspired to some degree by his enthusiastic reaction to the "new reality" of this city. But the geometric-abstract-art movement was becoming in the forties what it is now—the safe, unimaginative, academic style of our time. Its greatest influence has been in the fields of graphic design and commercial art. It is much appreciated by the curators of corporate art collections.

Abstraction's other branch—the "organic," expressionist, non-geometric abstraction that appeared for the first time in Kandinsky's painting, in 1910—was marked by an equally strong commitment to ideas outside art. For Kandinsky, art was primarily a spiritual calling, a way to come into contact with the religious impulse hidden beneath the surface of things. Kandinsky's mystical drive (like Mondrian, he was a practicing Theosophist) gave his best paintings a tension that I feel in no other abstract work, with the exception of Paul Klee's, until the Abstract Expressionist breakthrough in the nineteen-forties, when once again a surge of quasi-religious philosophizing invaded art. For Pollock, Rothko, Newman, and several of their colleagues, the numinous element was primitive myths, filtered through the writings of Freud and Jung. Newman's "Stations of the Cross" paintings and the dark abstract canvases in the Rothko Chapel in Houston indicate the extent to which religious feeling became specific in their later work. Rothko claimed that "lots of people" broke down and wept when confronted with his paintings. "The people who weep before my pictures are having the same religious experience I had when I painted them," he told an interviewer in the nine-



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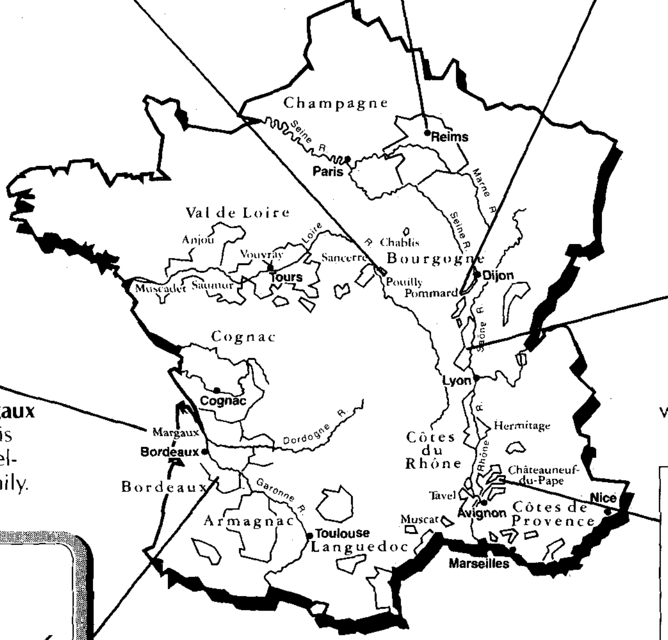
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teen-fifties. "And if you, as you say, are moved only by their color relationships then you miss the point." The second generation of Abstract Expressionists could not sustain this sort of claim, or the passion behind it. They simply took over the style, which became, in their highly competent hands, a worldwide cliché. What I am suggesting is that non-objective painting, in whatever form it happens to take, seems to require a superstructure of non-aesthetic ideals. Deprived of that superstructure, relegated to art for art's sake, abstraction succumbs to its inherent weakness and becomes mere decoration. Picasso foresaw that. "Abstract art is only painting," he said. "What about drama?"

Frank Stella, one of the most admired abstract artists of our time, voiced the same doubt in his series of lectures at Harvard two years ago. Stella said that abstract art had not solved its central problem, which was how to compensate for the loss of the human figure. The only way it can do so, he argued, is to create the kind of pictorial drama that Abstract Expressionism achieved at its highest levels—the drama that all painting must have if it is going to be a living thing. Stella clearly believes that the missing pictorial drama can be regained. He thinks he is close to achieving it in his own powerfully dynamic relief constructions. (False modesty is not a Stella trait.) And in his Harvard lectures he said that it need not be based on the kind of metaphysical ideas that inspired Kandinsky, Mondrian, and Malevich. Instead of metaphysics, which Stella associates with Northern European art and thought, he puts his faith in "the tough, stubborn materialism of Cézanne, Monet, and Picasso"—Southern Europeans, whose interest lay primarily in pictorial values rather than in ideas. He may be right. If so, the history of abstract art to date will prove to have been somewhat irrelevant.

A RADICALLY different approach to the problem has been proposed by Robert Irwin, an artist who has virtually nothing in common with Stella except the conviction that abstract art has not lived up to its potential. Irwin, who grew up in California, is the most metaphysically inclined artist this side of Tibet. After a series of aesthetic leaps that took him from Abstract Expressionist painting, through increasingly Minimalist stages of painting and object-making,

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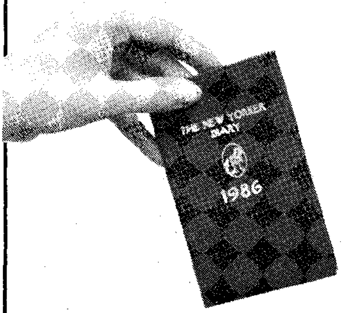

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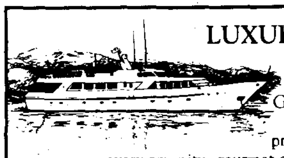

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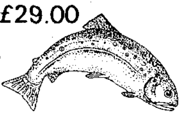

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to a final jumping-off point where he simply worked with natural light in empty rooms, Irwin withdrew from the art world. He spent a couple of years reading and thinking. He immersed himself in philosophy, with particular emphasis on the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl. Since his return to the world, in 1977 (his *partial* return; he still spends a lot of his time in a near-empty room in a Las Vegas high rise, overlooking the desert), Irwin has busied himself with proposals for "environmental" works for public spaces, several of which have been realized. These range from an aerial violet-colored V-shaped fence, mounted fifteen feet off the ground, in a eucalyptus grove near San Diego to a set of forty-eight translucent squares suspended in the atrium of the landmark Old Post Office Building, in Washington, D.C. They are difficult to envisage, even in photographs. Irwin's recent show at the Pace Gallery here was puzzling in this regard, because the photographs and drawings, and even the scale models, of his projects gave so little sense of what it was like to experience them in situ. However, Irwin has set forth the thinking behind his recent work in a remarkable essay, which is printed in a catalogue of his environmental projects called "Being and Circumstance: Notes Toward a Conditional Art" (Lapis Press). As a rationale for going beyond art, this one is right up there with Kandinsky and Mondrian.

The true purpose of abstract art, as Irwin sees it, was always to extend art's boundaries. Unless artists live up to the challenge of continuing this process, "the whole enterprise of 'modern art' can slip back (as it is threatening to do) to its lowest common denominator—individual indulgence pawned off as self-expression." Irwin believes that the boundary most in need of being expanded right now is the one that keeps art from dealing with the universal experience of change. Irwin sees the future of art in phenomenological terms, as a means of heightening our powers of perception. He wants to wake us up to the phenomenal life we lead at every moment, and of which we are mostly unaware. His method is to set up environmental situations that encourage the viewer to look about him with the eye of an artist. No finite work of art can compare in importance with this individual act of perception, Irwin argues: "There is nothing more real, more interesting, more powerful, more

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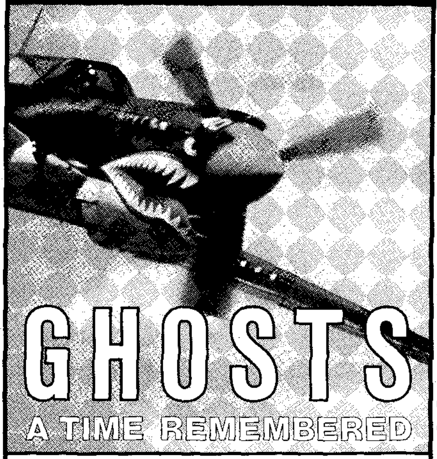

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informative, more important, or more beautiful."

No lack of utopian fervor there. Irwin's approach is as metaphysical as Mondrian's, and as socially oriented as Tatlin's—he wants to improve the quality of everyday life. The difference between his approach and theirs lies in his willingness to delegate a major share of responsibility to the observer. Both De Stijl and Constructivism stressed absolute goals—absolute control, absolute purity, absolute harmony—and both tended to view individualism as outmoded. Irwin, the Californian, is more laid back and less authoritarian. Art is, or should be, "knowing in action," he says, and the artist's job now is to provide an opportunity to further that sort of knowing. In a sense, he is echoing the point that Marcel Duchamp made nearly thirty years ago. Duchamp said that the artist performed only one part of the creative act. The other part was up to the onlooker, whose response to and interpretation of what the artist had done completed the creative cycle. Irwin goes further than Duchamp, though; like Rothko, he wants artist and onlooker to have the same experience. Art, for Irwin, is not "a conceptualized ideal, science, or a discipline, but a method, a particularized kind or state of awareness . . . What applied to the artist, now applies to the observer. And in this responsibility of the individual observer we can see the first social implication of a phenomenal art."

It is up to us, then, as specific observers, to validate the future of abstract art. If I knew Irwin's recent work only from photographs, my reaction to this might be different. By chance, though, I have seen two of his completed public projects. One is in Dallas—a Cor-Ten steel wall, as elusive as smoke, that appears and disappears as it slices through the grassy islands in one of those infernally complex urban traffic circles, transforming what should be a hideous non-space into something interesting and slightly mysterious. The other is in Seattle. It is a series of nine outdoor "rooms" on the plaza of the downtown Public Safety Building—square rooms formed by blue fencing material sixteen feet high, each of which contains a large concrete planter with a flowering plum tree. Here, as in Dallas, an uninviting site has been turned into a surprising and oddly beautiful place, a place that invites and rewards the kind of attention that Irwin wants us to pay.

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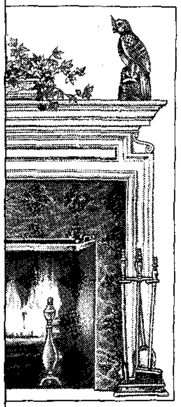
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I would like to quote again from "Being and Circumstance," to suggest the kind of attention that Irwin himself pays when he visits a potential project site:

> This means sitting, watching, and walking through the site, the surrounding areas (where you will enter from and exit to), the city at large or the countryside. Here there are numerous things to consider: what is the site's relation to applied and implied schemes of organization and systems of order, relation, architecture, uses, distances, sense of scale? For example, are we dealing with New York verticals or big sky Montana? What kinds of natural events affect the site—snow, wind, sun angles, sunrise, water, etc.? What is the physical and people density? the sound and visual density (quiet, next-to-quiet, or busy)? What are the qualities of surface, sound, movement, light, etc.? What are the qualities of detail, levels of finish, craft? What are the histories of prior and current uses, present desires, etc.? A quiet distillation of all this—while directly experiencing the site—determines all the facets of the "sculptural response": aesthetic sensibility, levels and kinds of physicality, gesture, dimensions, materials, kind and level of finish, details, etc.; whether the response should be monumental or ephemeral, aggressive or gentle, useful or useless, sculptural, architectural, or simply the planting of a tree, or maybe even doing nothing at all.

For some time now, it has seemed to me that Irwin's work in public spaces—and the work of a few artists who are involved in similar projects (although with markedly different ideas and approaches)—is far and away the most interesting direction in contemporary art. Until now, I had not thought of their work as a continuation of abstract art, but maybe that is what it is. Certainly none of these artists are involved with representation in any form. Richard Fleischner's landscaped plazas, Siah Armajani's "reading rooms" and vernacular bridges, the waterfront park that Mary Miss, in collaboration with the architectural firm Cooper, Eckstut, has designed for Battery Park City all offer a level of aesthetic pleasure that heightens my sense of awareness, which is something I could say of very few gallery or museum shows in recent years. The fact that Irwin's ideas sound utopian is in his favor. Considering the present art-world climate of careerism and frenzied competition, it may well be the only way out.

—CALVIN TOMKINS

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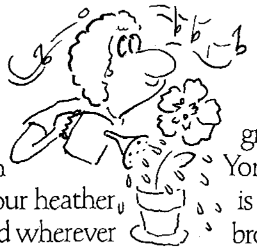

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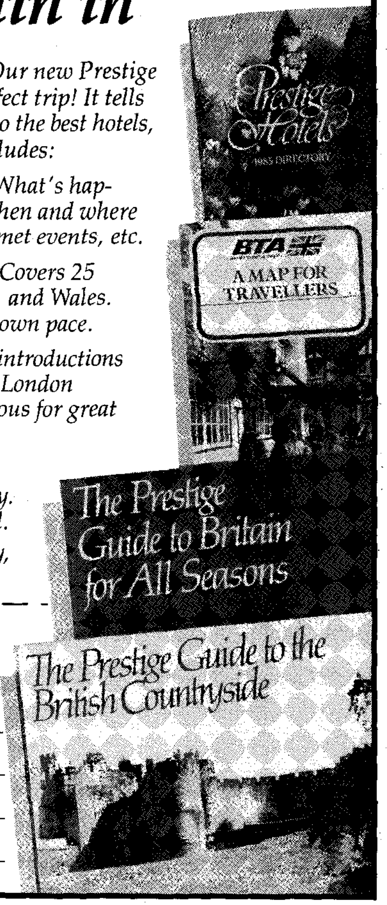
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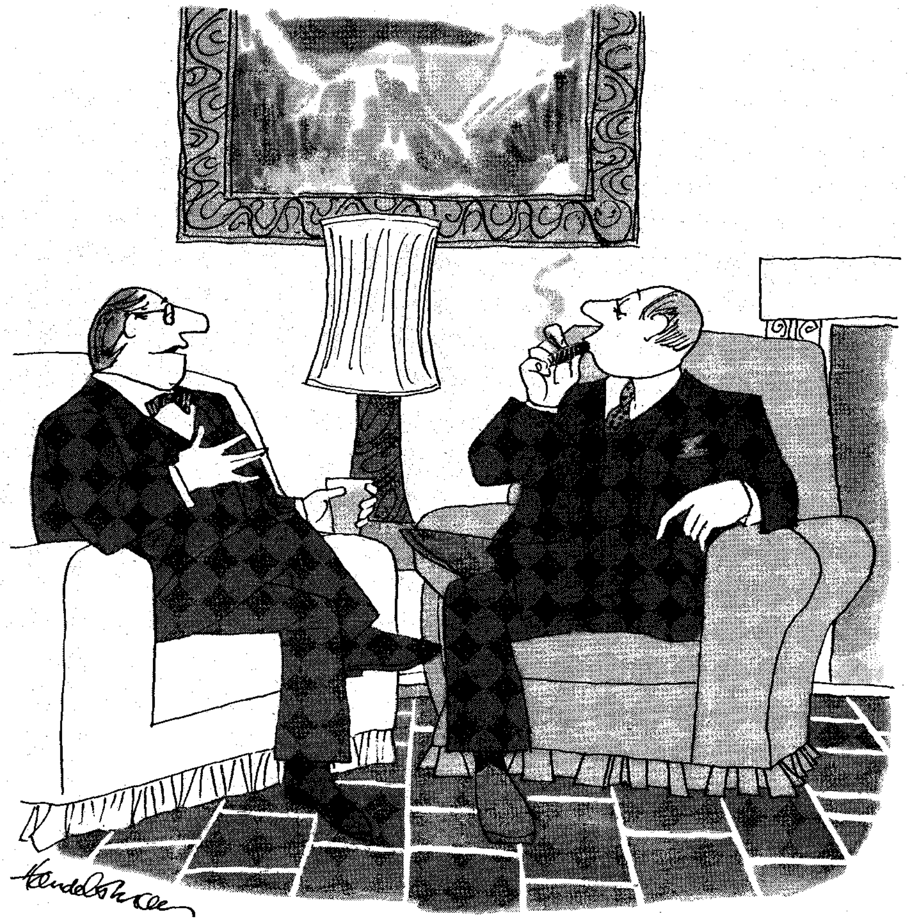
THE THEATRE

Off Broadway

THE Negro Ensemble Company opened its season at Theatre Four last week with a new play, "Eyes of the American," by Samm-Art Williams, one of its stronger dramatists, and with a cast of three of its strongest actors—Glynn Turman, Graham Brown, and Seret Scott. The setting is a recently independent island in the West Indies. Mr. Turman appears first as a happy-go-lucky cabdriver, bowing and scraping for the tourists in order to make enough to support his wife and small son, and later as a smoldering rebel; Mr. Brown doubles as an old friend of his, now the military dictator of the island, and as a C.I.A. man lightly disguised as an executive of a textile company; and Miss Scott plays both the cabdriver's loving wife and a tough revolutionary aide to the dictator. News that the Cubans are planning to build an airstrip on the island brings the C.I.A. man down there, and it is his presence (I think) that determines the political course of the action, and its eventual violence and bloodshed. The action is a series of small scenes and flash impersonations and mimicry, and a lot of the time I had no idea what was going on. The play has passion, humor, and some urgency—everything, that is, except clarity and the spirit we expect from Mr. Williams, whose marvellous "Home" was one of the glories of the 1980-81 season, both off and later on Broadway. "Eyes" was directed by Walter Dallas; the good setting was designed by Llewellyn Harrison and very well lighted by Sylvester N. Weaver, Jr.; Julian Asion designed the effective costumes.

MANHATTAN PUNCH LINE, the company that is dedicated to comedy, has unearthed a new humorist—new to me, anyway—named Gil Schwartz, whose subject in "Love As We Know It," at Intar, is sex à la mode. The show is split in two: Act I consists of seven skits, and Act II is a play, kind of, which is just as skittish. Synopsis is out of the question. As is true with many humorists of limited experience, Mr. Schwartz's effort to be funny occasionally shows, thereby, of course, killing his joke. More often than not, though, the effect is carefree, sly, and original; there are many more hits than misses. I cannot imagine how any dramatist could be better served than he is by the company assembled or by his director, Josh Mostel. The actors, all of them dandy comedians, are Polly Draper, Michael Countryman, Marek Johnson, John C. McGinley, and Karen Ludwig—who, by the way, also evokes much laughter as an oddball monologuist. The ingenious settings (an arrangement of screens) are by Randy Benjamin, and they are lighted by Greg MacPherson and shifted by David Healy and Leslie Sergeant Wise, who also handle the props, à la mode de Chinese theatre. Costumes by Mimi Maxmen.



"In this country, Tom, you're completely free to do absolutely anything you like. Oh, sure, sometimes you have to go to jail for it."

DON NIGRO'S "Seascape with Sharks and Dancer," at Hudson Guild, is more actors' exercise than play. It is about a writer who lives by himself on Cape Cod and a crazy waif of sorts whom he fishes out of the Atlantic in the middle of the night. He allows her—even encourages her—to remain in his house and bed for a couple of months, and he submits calmly to the battering, psychological and physical, that she gives him, and his submission presumably helps her to return to sanity. The two are deeply attached to each other, or are supposed to be. The show is sporadically entertaining, but I didn't believe a word of it. Again, it is the actors who almost pulled it out of the drink. They are the commendable Ivar Brogger and the commendable Susan Greenhill. David Kerry Heefner directed.

—EDITH OLIVER

•

The Commerce Department predicts that the U.S. will export between $225 billion to $230 billion in goods this year and import about $380 billion. This leaves a trade deficit approaching $150 or more. —*Newsletter of Representative Marty Russo, of Illinois.*

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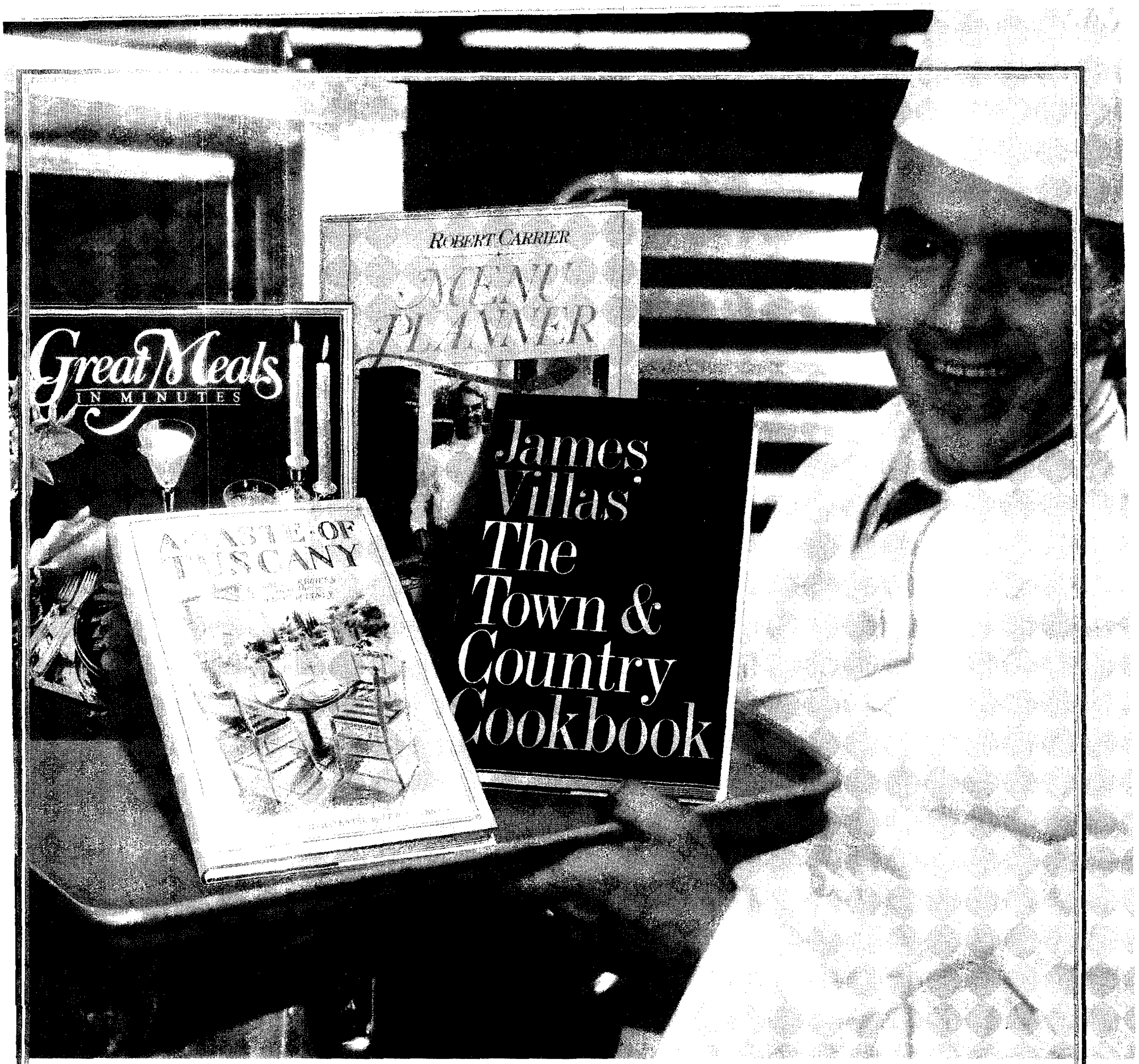

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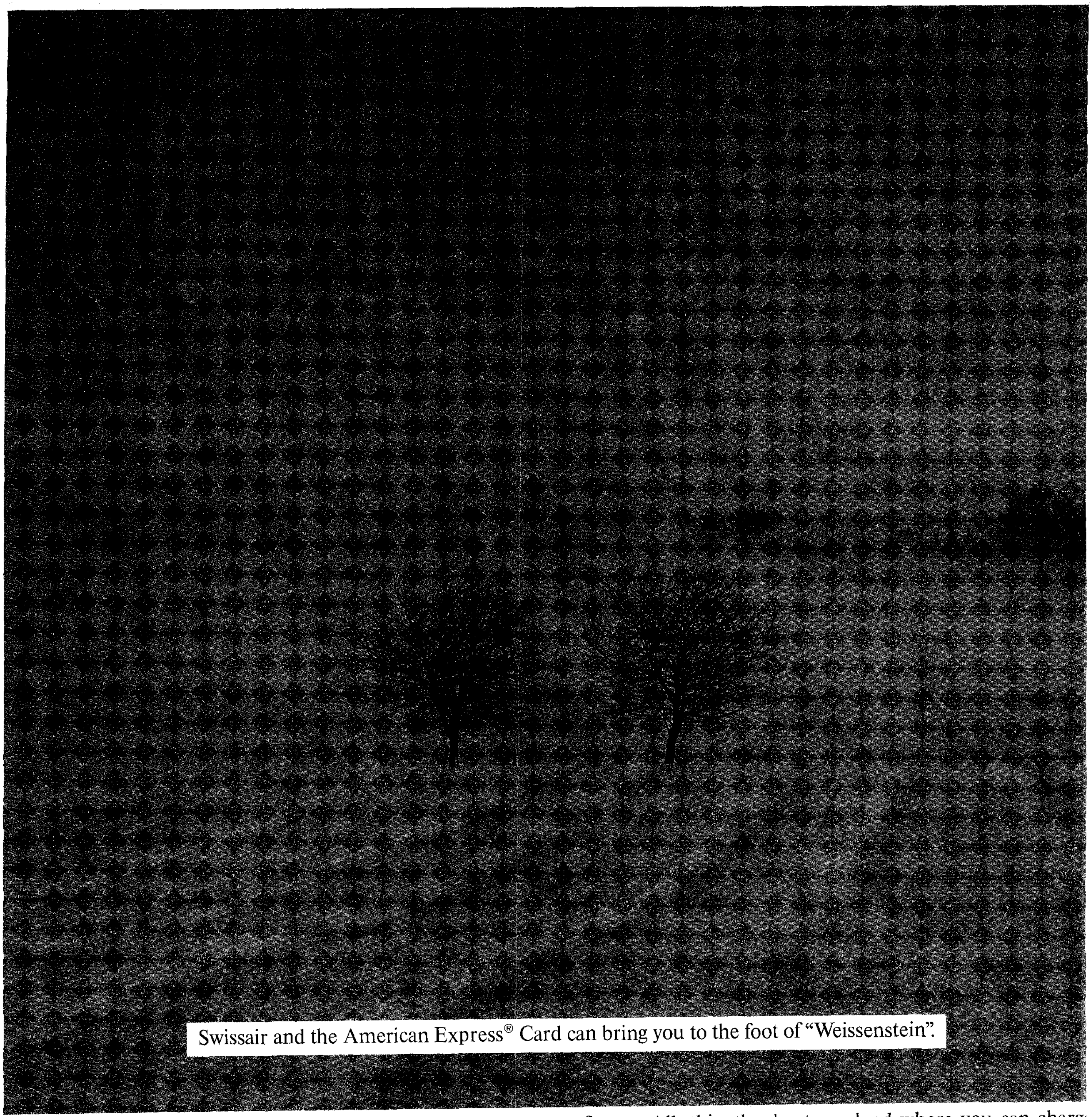

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BOOKS

Captain McCrae and Captain Call

Larry McMurtry's huge new novel, "Lonesome Dove" (Simon & Schuster; $18.95), takes place in the late eighteen-seventies and is built around a cattle drive that begins in southern Texas and ends, six months later, in northern Montana. (The drive appears to take place in the late seventies; there are few dates in the book, and the internal evidence is casual.) The novel, eight hundred and forty-three closely packed pages, resembles a sponge: add the fluid of reading, and it slowly swells until it covers all its vast and wild setting. Very slowly swells. McMurtry uses his first two hundred and twenty pages to introduce Lonesome Dove, a hot, dusty, motionless hamlet on the Rio Grande, which contains a saloon, a general store, a barbershop, a church, and a livery stable. This last, the Hat Creek Cattle Company, is owned by the novel's principal figures: Captain Augustus McCrae, a former Texas Ranger, probably in his fifties, who was born of well-to-do people in Tennessee, spent a year at a Virginia college, and has been widowed twice; and Captain Woodrow F. Call, also a former Ranger, probably in his fifties, who was born in Scotland and was raised in this country and, though never married, has one child. McCrae and Call are opposites. Call is short, industrious, humorless, taciturn, and commanding. He is puritanical to the ironic point of refusing to acknowledge his son. He has a ferocious temper and is a deadly fighter. He is impossibly stubborn. McCrae is three or four inches taller than Call, and he talks endlessly in his cannon voice, said to be audible a mile away. He leans toward philosophy, he likes to read the Prophets, and he is lackadaisical until stirred. He passes his time in Lonesome Dove (he and Call have lived there ten years) drinking whiskey, playing cards, talking, laughing, making sourdough biscuits, and visiting the town whore, the beautiful Lorena Wood. Although McCrae and Call have no great obvious affection for one another, they have gradually grown into indivisible, complementary halves, and when one of them is eventually done in, the other immediately begins to dwindle. They form a curious and affecting two-in-one fictional creation, a yin and yang that McMurtry has experimented with before (the mother and daughter in "Terms of Endearment"). Here is how McCrae and Call talk to one another:

> "When was you the happiest, Call?" Augustus asked.
>
> "Happiest about what?" Call asked.
>
> "Just about being a live human being, free on the earth," Augustus said.
>
> "Well, it's hard to single out any one particular time," Call said.
>
> "It ain't for me," Augustus said. "I was happiest right back there by that little creek. I fell short of the mark and lost the woman, but the times were sweet."
>
> It seemed an odd choice to Call. After all, Gus had been married twice.
>
> "What about your wives?" he asked.
>
> "Well, it's peculiar," Augustus said. "I never was drawn to fat women, and yet I married two of them. People do odd things, all except you. I don't think you ever wanted to be happy anyway. It don't suit you, so you managed to avoid it."
>
> "That's silly," Call said.
>
> "It ain't, either," Augustus said. "I don't guess I've watched you punish yourself for thirty years to be totally wrong about you. I just don't know what you done to deserve the punishment."

The book itself comes in two parts. The first includes the opening section in Lonesome Dove and a section near the end of the novel set in the house of Clara Allen, who lives outside Ogallala, Nebraska, on the North Platte. Here McMurtry again works at a kind of two-part character. Clara is Gus McCrae's old by-the-creek sweetheart and the wife of a slow-witted Kentucky horse trader, and July Johnson is a sheriff who is half her age. Dickensian coincidence, which McMurtry flourishes stylishly throughout the book, brings them together. Clara hires Johnson as a hand on her horse ranch, and he falls in love with her. He is weak, indecisive, and inarticulate, while she is outspoken,

"You're being awfully nice."

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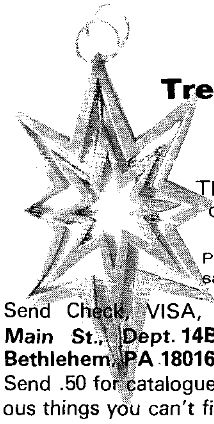

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perverse, intelligent, selfish, highstrung, and angry. (She has two daughters, but her three beloved sons have died.) She is the sort of charging, red-cheeked out-of-reach beauty that introverted men fall stupidly in love with. American fiction has few full-scale female protagonists; Clara Allen is a Jamesian exception. The second part of "Lonesome Dove"—its very long middle section—concerns the cattle drive, and this is the work of McMurtry the commercial traveller, the seller of books-that-turn-so-easily-into-movies. The cattle drive is highly visual. There are hailstorms, sandstorms, snowstorms, cloudbursts, thunderstorms, and a locust plague. People are killed by guns, knives, hanging, lightning, snakes, Indians, and gangrene. There is a terrible kidnapping, involving Lorena Wood and a vicious Indian, Blue Duck, who unaccountably talks like an early James Cagney thug. There is a terrifying battle between a grizzly bear and a bull. Yet this calamitous crush never develops the momentum its parts demand; the book never quite gets free of the glutinous pace McMurtry sets in the opening pages.

McMurtry doesn't do much about demythicizing his subject. He skirts the worst clichés of Western writing, and throughout he is simply matter-of-fact. His prose is even and bare, his dialogue is sufficiently baggy. (The way the prototypes of McMurtry's characters spoke might be difficult to follow today—just as Mark Twain's attempt to get Jim down accurately in "Huckleberry Finn" tends to stymie most contemporary readers.) But one yearns for more *texture* in "Lonesome Dove." The settled West of the eighteen-seventies was often seedy and makeshift, and although McMurtry implies this again and again, he does not give us enough descriptions like this one of Clara's early married life: "Clara had always hated the sod house—hated the dirt that seeped down on her bedclothes, year after year. It was dust that caused her firstborn, Jim, to cough virtually from his birth until he died a year later. In the mornings Clara would walk down and wash her hair in the icy waters of the Platte, and yet by supper time, if she happened to scratch her head, her fingernails would fill with dirt . . . She tacked muslin, and finally canvas, on the ceiling over the bed but nothing stopped the dirt . . . Centipedes and other bugs loved the roof; day after day they crawled down the walls, to end up in her stewpots or her skillets or the trunks where she stored her clothes."

The book needs an endpaper map. McMurtry is as vague about place as he is about time, and it would have helped us across the Great Plains. It would also have shown us the newly laid tracks of the Union Pacific, which McMurtry's light-footed cattle somehow never cross.

—Whitney Balliett

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

Waiting for the End of the World, by Madison Smartt Bell (Ticknor & Fields; $16.95). Mr. Bell's novel, his second, is about a rich young New Yorker turned artist turned psychologist turned anarchist and terrorist, who assembles a group of more or less disciples—a Vietnam veteran, a former cocaine courier, a chemist capable of making a nuclear bomb, and one other. The other is a onetime music student now an occasional medical photographer named Clarence Larkin. Larkin is the central character, a mystery and a mystic, a man driven by demons and consumed by apathy. The aim of the group is to detonate a nuclear bomb under Times Square. It is not at all clear why. There is also, to underline a message or deepen an enigma, a little boy gifted with second sight, who has been abused and burned by his diabolist father and is protected by Larkin. It is difficult, if not impossible, to know exactly what Mr. Bell is trying to tell us here. That Western Man has reached the end of his rope? That the Apocalypse is near? That it is here? What he most clearly shows us is the underside of Manhattan and Brooklyn—a world of what can only be called misfits—and a talent that is breathtaking. Every sentence he writes is a joy, and, whatever his purpose, his novel is exhilarating.

Illywhacker, by Peter Carey (Harper & Row; $18.95). This long tall tale from down under is narrated by a luckless illywhacker, or con man, named Herbert Badgery, who hates selling Model T's before he fails at building airplanes, and who lives long enough to see his grandson board a jet to Japan and persuade a Japanese corporation to underwrite the Badgery Pet Emporium of downtown Sydney, even

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though Australia has exported most of its stock of exotic birds and reptiles. The contents of the Emporium's cages will come as a surprise to the reader who has not noticed that this novel is a bitter parable about greed. Mr. Carey knows how to maintain tension in his three-generation, six-hundred-page yarn, and when to work on its impossible tangles, which tend to feature machinery that looks like Australian fauna and fauna that looks like Australian machinery. An excerpt from Mark Twain's "More Tramps Abroad" (1897) serves (along with a long definition of "illywhacker") as an apt epigraph. "Australian history," Twain wrote, "does not read like history, but like the most beautiful lies."

FRIENDS ALONG THE WAY, by Julia Markus (Houghton Mifflin; $15.95). An engaging, if unresolved, novel. When we first meet her, in 1968, Betsy Lewis is in Rome with her art-dealer husband, living the self-conscious life of an American abroad—sharing impressions of Rome with fellow-Americans and dining on gnocchi at a local trattoria every Thursday night. Enter Leo Conti, a dashing union organizer whose passion and good humor energize Betsy, and take her memory, and the narrative, back to New Jersey in the nineteen-fifties, when her best friend was a brilliant, fiery black woman named Salmanda Blake. The scenes in Rome, with their promise of a romantic liaison between Betsy and Leo, are lively. But when the story jumps again, to the nineteen-seventies, and Betsy runs into Salmanda in New York, Salmanda has metamorphosed from a radical lesbian into a personnel director for a drug company. And Betsy—with a new job and an illegal Manhattan sublet—has become almost as thin a creation. The two meet in the city for brunch, and Betsy says, "We were both thirty-five minutes and light years away from Passaic, effortlessly versed in Black Forest ham omelettes with Brie, spinach salads, quiches of the day, French toast made with challah." Readers presented with the problem of a young woman's self-definition may wish for a resolution more satisfying than her ironic detachment from her own life.

NOTE: "They Sleep Without Dreaming," a collection of stories by Penelope Gilliatt, has been published by Dodd, Mead ($14.95). Most of the stories originally appeared in *The New Yorker*.

GENERAL

ORSON WELLES, by Barbara Leaming (Viking; $19.95). An exceptionally entertaining account of a man who was more or less publicly accused of being a genius at the age of three and who spent the rest of his life fulfilling and dodging that appellation. The author is industrious, though no stylist—dealing with one or another of the many serious crises Welles confronted in his seventy years, she will write, "Orson wasn't kidding"—and she has accumulated a welcome mountain of information for future biographers to weigh and discard. Whether in conscious or unconscious anticipation of his sudden death, Welles coöperated in Miss Leaming's feats of family excavation. Moreover, from time to time the author abandons the formal biographical mode and inserts a chapter, printed in italics, of what amounts to informal chitchat between her and her subject. Not the least admirable aspect of Welles' character was that he didn't suppose that his "odd-man-out" relationship to his times made him heroic. His life, if not his professional career (or careers, for he was many things besides an actor, writer, and producer), proved fruitful as well as joyous, and it appears that his gusto remained undiminished to the end.

AN EGYPTIAN JOURNAL, by William Golding (Faber; $19.95). The Nobel Prize-winning novelist describes his lifelong interest in Egypt, his previous travels there, and his perplexity—his search for a plan or a theme—when a publisher asked him to revisit that country to write about it. Mr. Golding's worries included his age—seventy-two—and his tendency to imagine too much. But by the time he decides to rent a boat at Cairo to take him and his wife on a month-long journey up and down the Nile his readers are almost accomplices in his undertaking. The boat is small, and has a habit of breaking down; the crew is large, and has a habit of going its own way. The trip becomes a leisurely, grand, almost epic comedy. Mr. and Mrs. Golding go where the Nile and the crew take them, subordinating the English agenda to

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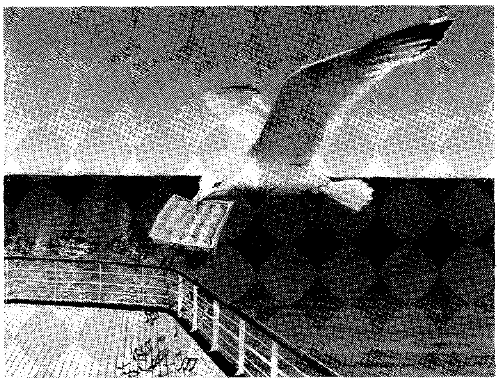

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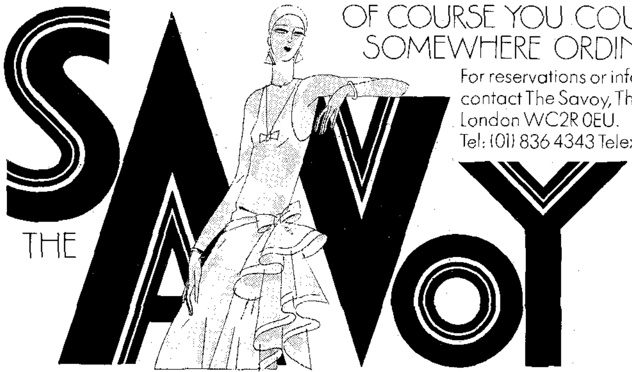

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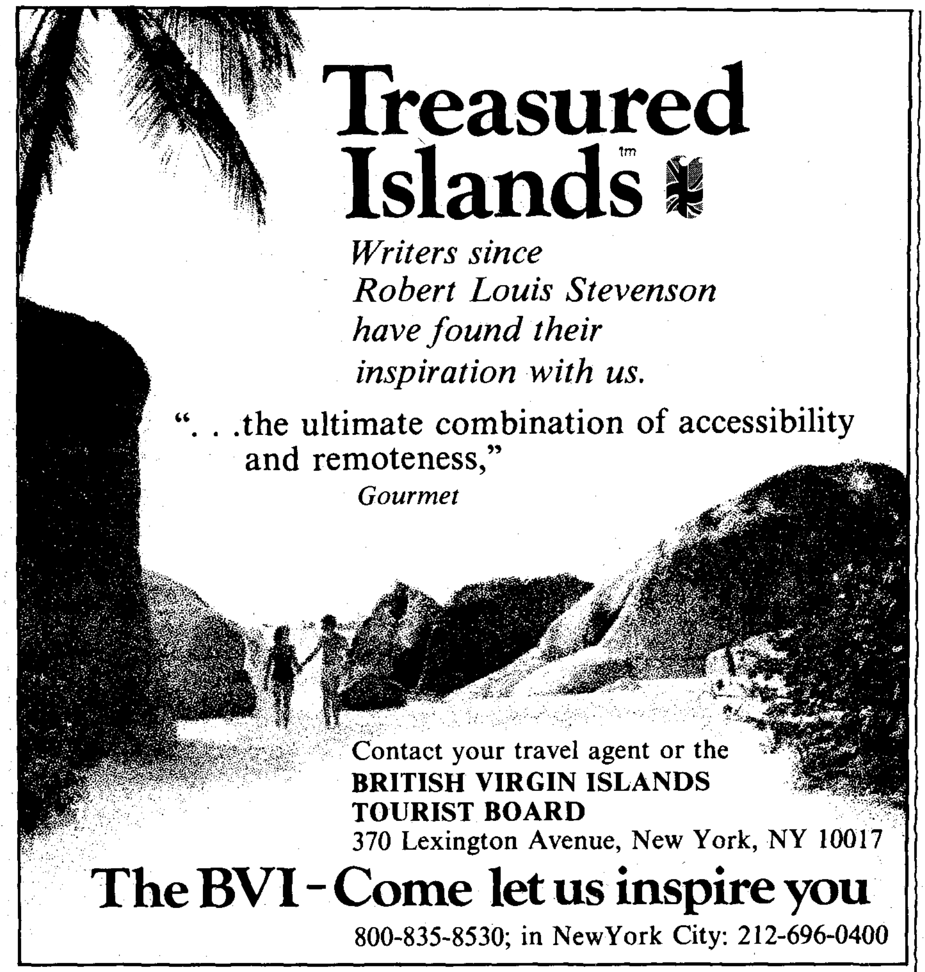
the Egyptians' desire to visit their home villages. Like the Princes of Serendip, the Goldings find their trip a marvellous series of discoveries and surprises—encounters both official and informal with monuments and craftsmen and birds and boats. Though Mr. Golding makes no claims for his book's importance, he has managed to convey a feeling of everyday life along the Nile and of people living on the ruins of antiquity, not posing for tourists but caught off guard.

THE OXFORD BOOK OF AGES, edited by Anthony and Sally Sampson (Oxford; $13.95). Comments on every year that anyone under the age of a hundred and one has ever celebrated or concealed. No firsthand comments on the first twelve months (to Queen Victoria they were mostly a matter of "that terrible frog-like action"), but George Sand remembers having leeches applied behind an ear sometime before her second birthday. Artur Rubinstein proved to have perfect pitch at two. Some readers know what James James Morrison Morrison Weatherby George Dupree did when he was only three. Nineteen million men, whether they knew it or not, were the property of a four-year-old named Louis XIV—and on it goes, a sort of historically haphazard biographical cross-section of an impossible-seeming species. "How old I am!" an eleven-year-old Anaïs Nin indites in her diary. "What I wouldn't give to be seventy again!" Oliver Wendell Holmes writes twenty-two years after the fact. At seventy-one, Corot feels like fifteen; at fifty-five, Virginia Woolf feels like six and a half. At *forty, the Wife of Bath marries a* man (her fifth husband) half her age; at eighty, Pablo Casals notes that his father-in-law is thirty years his junior. The secret of longevity seems not to be one's diet. Disraeli reports that at eighty the Prime Minister, Lord Palmerston, began a dinner with two plates of turtle soup; for his ninth meat course, he chose pheasant. A sixteenth-century centenarian found that one egg yolk would do for two meals.

A SECOND PARADISE: INDIAN COURTLY LIFE 1590-1947, by Naveen Patnaik (Doubleday; $40). A lavishly produced portrayal of the life and personages of the courts of India over the centuries from the reign of the Mogul Emperor Akbar



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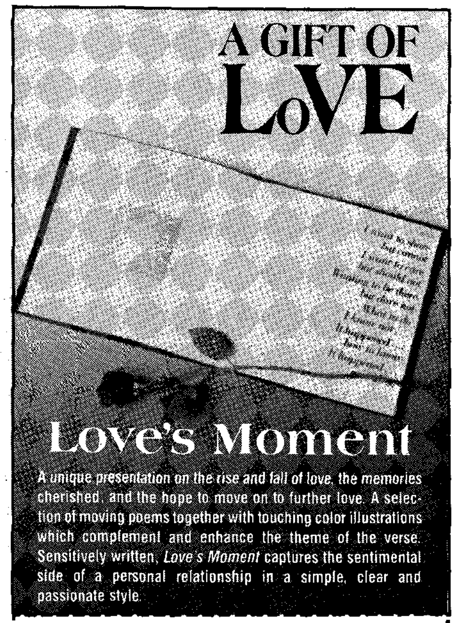

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to Independence. The book is illustrated with color reproductions of miniature paintings by artists attached to the princely courts, and with photographs, mostly of maharajas and their consorts and concubines. Both text and pictures try to evoke the sumptuousness of the life of the privileged people who basked in these silken tents and dallied in secret love pavilions, but so formalized and stiff—so *still*—is classic Indian art that it is hard to imagine these bejewelled creatures swooning with desire or getting much of a charge out of their elaborate entertainments.

STRINDBERG, by Michael Meyer (Random House; $24.95). When he was thirty-one, Strindberg wrote to a publisher, "If only I could escape my money troubles for two months, I would flourish like a rose in Sharon and enrich the whore literature of Sweden with several notable contributions." He was not to escape money troubles until the very last years of his life—he died in 1912, at the age of sixty-three—but he was to enrich not only Swedish but world literature, in (as with everything else he did) his own peculiar way. Mr. Meyer, who has written a prize-winning biography of Strindberg's arch-rival, Henrik Ibsen, focusses his critical attention on Strindberg the playwright, and on his masterpieces—"The Father," "Miss Julie," "Creditors," "The Ghost Sonata"—but he does not scant the particulars of one of the most erratic careers in literary history. Strindberg, who was believed mad by many contemporaries, considered himself a serious scientist as well as a writer: he dabbled in botany, astronomy and astrology, optics, anthropology and zoology (he thought the gorilla originated in the crossbreeding of a female monkey and a shipwrecked sailor), and chemistry and alchemy. (He claimed to be able to make gold, but he was always behind in the rent.) "This uneasy-minded man," as his onetime friend Knut Hamsun called him (nearly all Strindberg's friends—who included Gauguin, Delius, and Edvard Munch—were onetime), was also obsessed with sex throughout his life. He hated and denigrated women ("With love comes hatred," he said), and, of course, misogyny was the underlying theme of much of his dramatic writing—a fact that, in the end,

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will probably make much of his work obsolete. Strindberg seems, on the whole, an unpleasant and very lonely man; one almost pities him. Many good illustrations.

NOTE: "Following Through," a collection of Herbert Warren Wind's reports on golf, has been published by Ticknor & Fields ($20). All the pieces first appeared in *The New Yorker*.

MYSTERY AND CRIME

MANHATTAN GOTHIC, by Mel Arrighi (St. Martin's; $14.95). The hack novelist Carl Hopkins is introduced to Mirella Ludovisi, a sensual, aristocratic Italian, whose fiancé—an acquaintance of Carl's—has recently died under mysterious circumstances and left her rich. Carl, at loose ends in his work, finds himself excited both by Mirella's kinky sexuality and by the plot possibilities in her bizarre family history. Lurking in the shadows of Mirella's upper-East Side home is her mother, on the run from a European mental institution, where she was put after murdering her lover. A man who, like Mirella herself, may have been involved in the fiancé's death turns up and is shortly killed, apparently by a mugger. Carl's former lover is nearly knocked off in what may be a hit-and-run accident. Despite warnings from just about everyone he knows, Carl is drawn out of his own seedy existence and into Mirella's orbit, simultaneously fascinated and repelled by the ambiguous violence that seems to trail her. Mr. Arrighi exhibits a fine expertise (and just the trace of a smile) in setting up his cast—a splendid collection of grotesques—and his menacing house of mirrors, in which nothing is what it first seems to be.

•

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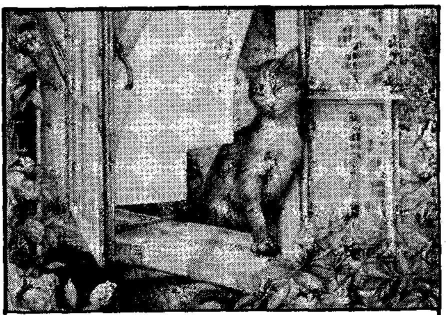

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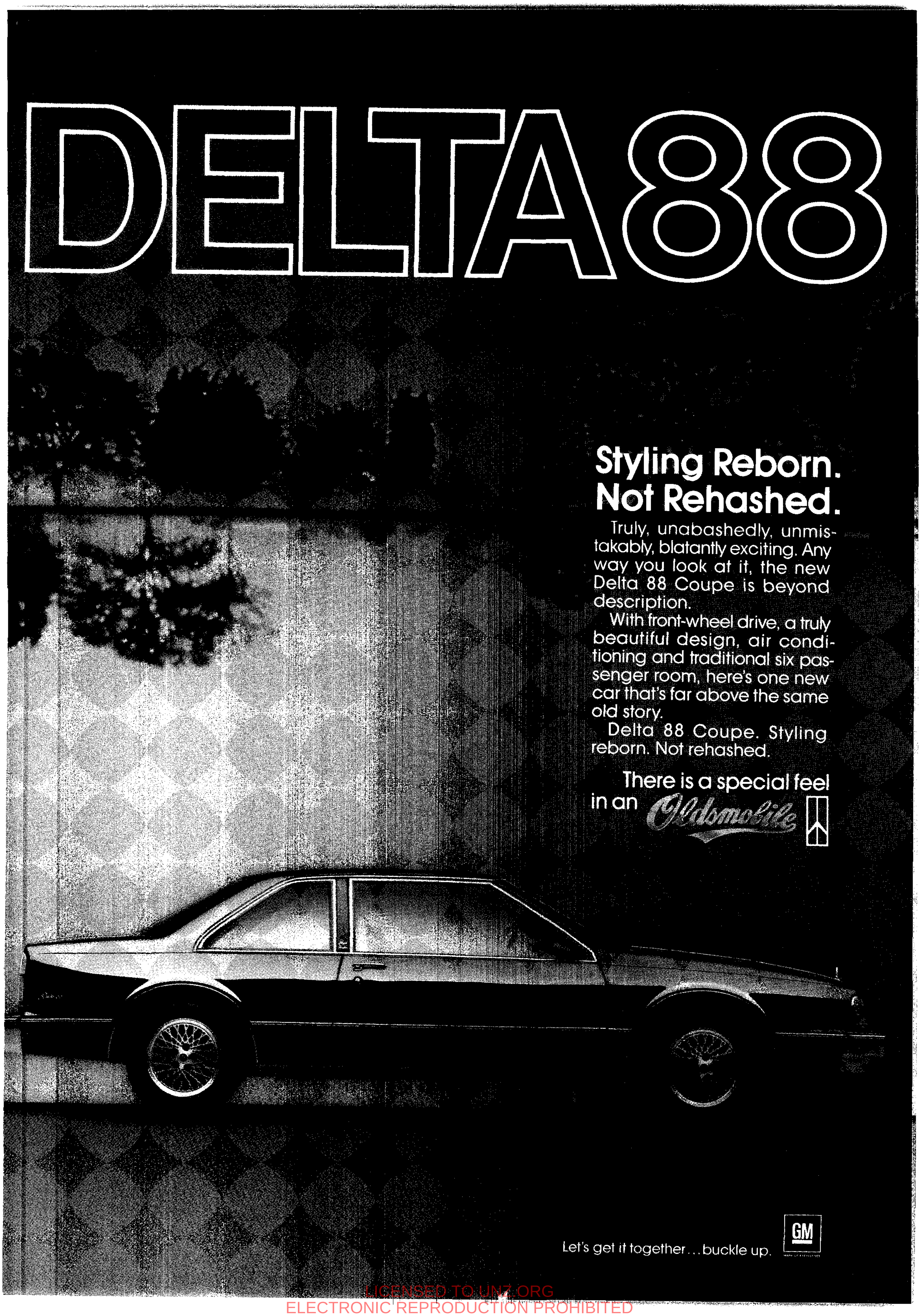

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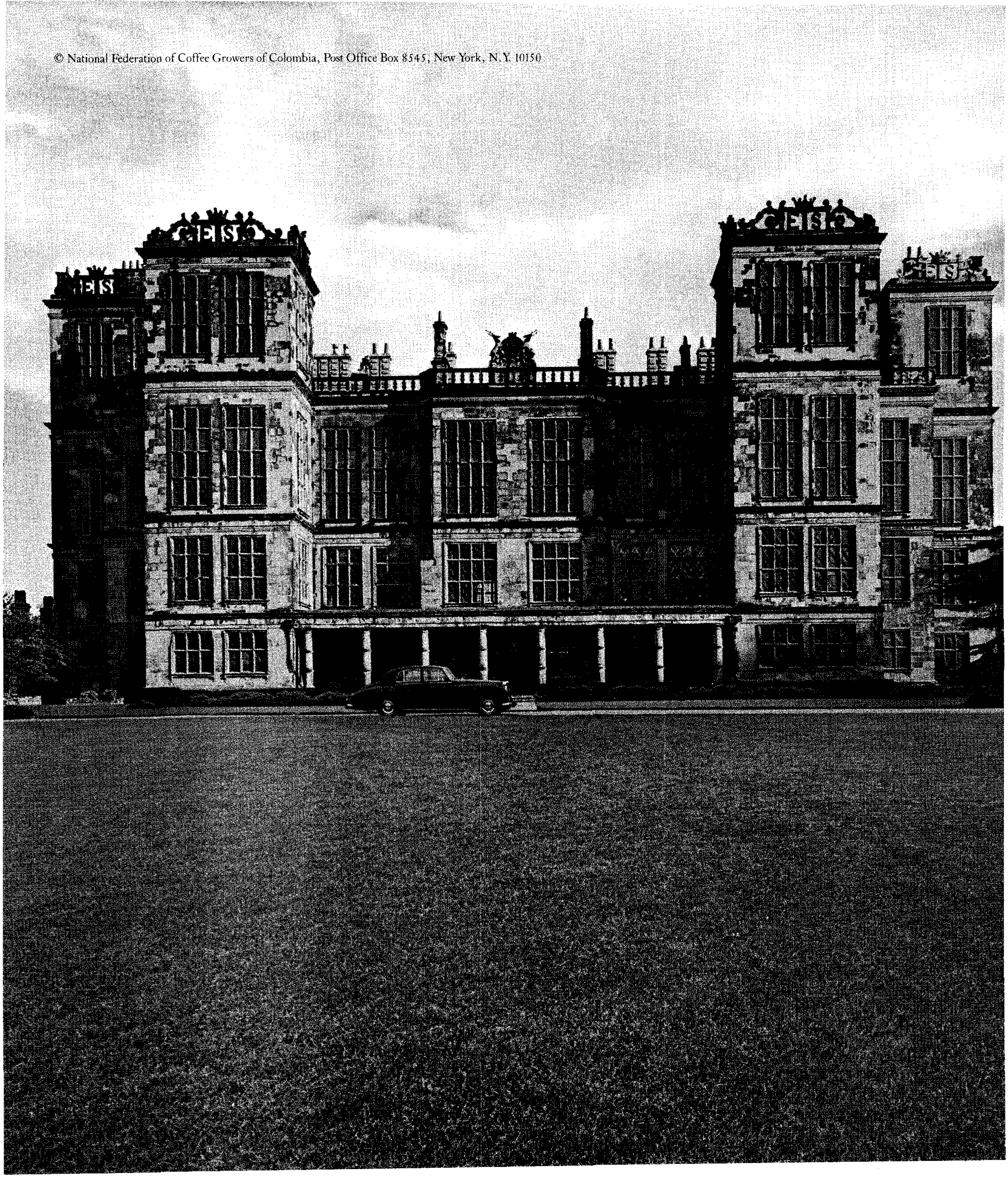© National Federation of Coffee Growers of Colombia, Post Office Box 8545, New York, N.Y. 10150

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